

Israel to drill for oil on Golan

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's national oil company said Wednesday it intends to raise \$12 million to drill for oil on the Golan Heights, seized by Israel from Syria in 1967 and now at the centre of their peace talks. "We have some prospect at what we call Zaviton on the Golan. In the oil business when you have money, you drill it," a spokesman for the state-owned company told Reuters. "The \$12 million will be for exploration, studies and drilling," he said. The company spokesman said a limited partnership was being set up to raise the funds, a noted tourist attraction. "This is a process which started more than two years ago... these things culminate in a prospect... and right now we are in the last stages," he said. Company Secretary Ami Ben-Bassat told Israel Radio Tuesday that politics had no bearing on the move: "We are relating to the Golan Heights only with professional or geological eyes." Israel's Maariv newspaper said geologists suggested the drilling following recent discovery of commercial quantities of oil in Syria. At slow-moving 21-month-old peace talks, Syria has demanded return of the entire plateau, but Israel will only detail plans for withdrawal if Syria agrees in full diplomatic and trade ties.

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Israeli secretly held 10 years as spy

TEL AVIV (R) — A scientist who had worked in an Israeli biological research centre has been secretly imprisoned for the past 10 years on charges he was a spy for the Soviet Union. The newspaper Maariv reported Tuesday. The scientist, a former member of the Kibbutz movement, was arrested in 1983 after the newspaper successfully fought a father-in-law's attempt to force the government to release him. The scientist, a former member of the Kibbutz movement, was arrested in 1983 after the newspaper successfully fought a father-in-law's attempt to force the government to release him. The scientist, a former member of the Kibbutz movement, was arrested in 1983 after the newspaper successfully fought a father-in-law's attempt to force the government to release him.

Palestinians prefer confederation to end stalemate, Ashrawi says

PLO willing to consider 'Gaza first' with Jericho
Christopher dampens breakthrough hope, continues mission

Combined agency dispatches

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM — Israelis and Palestinians should negotiate a Palestinian confederation with Jordan rather than autonomy in the occupied territories in order to break the deadlock in the Middle East peace talks, a Palestinian spokeswoman said Tuesday.

"I think confederation is a much better approach because then you can talk about an objective or goal and you can construct a road map toward that goal," said Hanan Ashrawi, spokeswoman of the Palestinian negotiating team, after six delegates met with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

Both Mr. Christopher and Dr. Ashrawi referred to the "difficult" circumstances of the meeting. It came after Israel's largest assault on Lebanon since its 1982 invasion, as well as lack of progress 21 months after the peace talks started in Madrid.

After the two-hour meeting at the U.S. consulate in East Jerusalem, Mr. Christopher called the discussions good, but would not say more.

Dr. Ashrawi also said the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) will consider taking control of a small area of the occupied territories as a first step towards breaking the Middle East deadlock.

"The PLO is willing to look



U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher (right) and Palestinian leader Faisal Husseini smile as they shake hands at the beginning of the meeting between Mr. Christopher and members of the Palestinian peace talks delegation in East Jerusalem Tuesday (AFP photo)

into the Gaza first and Jericho first option as a beginning of the permanent status (in the occupied territories)," she said.

The issue of Gaza has not been raised officially at the peace talks, Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin had said Sunday. "We are quite enchanted with Gaza first, but much less so Jericho, but we don't reject the idea and would consider it seriously," he said.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres has repeatedly called for a "Gaza first" option in which the Palesti-

nians would take control of their daily lives in the Strip before the peace negotiations in the ceasefire be brokered between Israel, Lebanon and Syria on Saturday.

"The fighting in Lebanon last week is a disturbing reminder of how urgent our task is and how real are the enemies of peace," Mr. Christopher said after meeting Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

"But it's also an indication of peace," Mr. Christopher said. He saw fresh hope for the peace negotiations in the ceasefire be brokered between Israel, Lebanon and Syria on Saturday.

The Crown Prince said decision-making in Jordan would have greater participation with the election of a new Parliament later this year.

The stability of Jordan will be maintained "through pluralism, through greater participation in local government, participation in the accountability of both Parliament and its elected members by the constituents..." he said.

He expressed hope that the election campaign would lead to a greater focus on public issues, as opposed to continued focus on private issues and individual claims and requests by different groupings within the country.

"We believe that this election will bring about a greater parti-

Jordan continues to suffer under illogical pressure — Crown Prince

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan continues to suffer under international pressure despite its contribution to the Middle East peace process and its evenhanded policies, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said Tuesday.

"The pressure on Jordan today, with the continued sanctions as recorded by the U.N., (means) we are talking about 100s of 100,000s of dollars every month," the Crown Prince said in an interview with Spanish television.

"We feel that these pressures are illogical, and if the intention is political then the international community should consider incentive rather than pressure for a country that has done so much for peace," he said.

The Crown Prince was referring to the direct and indirect impact on the Jordanian economy of the continuing sanctions against Iraq. The Kingdom has lost its largest trading partner, Iraq, and is also suffering from the overzealous inspection of Aqaba-bound vessels by the enforcers of the sanctions against Iraq.

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Crown Prince Hassan of Jordan

Confederation depends on the will of the people — the Palestinian people and Jordanian people — and can only be realised in a situation of freedom and in the exercise of their full right of self-determination.

Q: How is the idea of confederation? How is in general the confederation between Jordan and Palestine?

A: As I said I think that the movement in the peace process is essential to any discussion about future status. I don't think that movement comes from Jordanian generosity. On the contrary, I think that Jordan has been conspicuous in its contribution — both the Jordanian-Palestinian umbrella and the attendance in both the multilateral and bilateral talks. To enhance our contribution, we have formed once again a Jordanian-Palestinian coordinating committee. The question of confederation on the other hand is a question, an issue to be resolved after the final status is achieved; of independence and indeed sovereignty for the Palestinians on their own soil in what is today occupied Palestine.

When that is achieved, the modality of self-determination will lead to full and free choice as to the structure of federation or confederation or future status ideas. These have been floated in the past in various forms, but I think it very premature to (discuss it) at this moment.

On Jordan's economy, the Crown Prince said:

"We have a good news that the national economy is achieving a growth of six per cent. The bad news is that, with the heavy human influx of returnees and migrants, it is very difficult to talk about maintaining per capita

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Draft legislation to replace Election Law reportedly ready for consideration

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government Tuesday appeared prepared to present His Majesty King Hussein with a draft legislation that would replace the country's current Election Law; but it was not immediately known whether the King was ready yet to act on the government's recommendation, according to highly-placed sources.

Official government spokesmen declined comment on the report, saying only that a draft legislation, if it actually existed, was not submitted to the full Cabinet for debate and approval.

The sources said that according to information available to them the draft legislation proposes the introduction of a one-person-one-vote formula even in constituencies with reserved seats for minorities.

They said the draft document, which could replace the Election Law as a temporary

legislation if endorsed by the King, did not propose the redrawing of voting districts.

Under the current bloc-voting system, voters have as many votes as the number of parliamentary seats assigned for their constituencies. Redrawing the voting precincts, which do not ensure equal parliamentary representation for equal number of voters, is believed to be the most complex process that the government would have had to tackle had it decided to address it in the reported new legislation.

The proposed changes are expected to work against large and well-organised groups which benefitted the most from the voters' right to vote for more than one candidate in the 1989 elections.

Observers say that under the current law, large groups were able to form alliances that allowed them to win a number of seats disproportionate to their actual support among vo-

ters.

The Muslim Brotherhood, which feels targeted by the possible change of the law, declined comment on Tuesday's report that a new draft Election Law has been finalised by the Ministry of Interior. It said it would declare its position once an official announcement on the change has been made.

The Brotherhood has threatened that it "will consider boycotting" the elections if the law was changed without the approval of the Lower House of Parliament.

The government dismissed the threat by saying "it will not be pushed around" by the Islamists or any other group in the country.

Well-informed political observers also pointed to the possibility of differences on the issue within the movement.

That the Brotherhood's warning was made in a statement issued by the movement's

information department rather than the office of the Brotherhood parliamentary bloc or the Islamic Action Front (IAF) is an indication that there are differences on the line of action within the movement, one observer told the Jordan Times Tuesday.

Statements expressing the Brotherhood's political views are usually made by the Brotherhood deputies' office or the IAF, under whose umbrella the movement's candidates would contest the next parliamentary elections around November.

The IAF and another 14 political parties have agreed that any changes to the Election Law be approved by the House, whose mandate ends on Nov. 23, but officials have effectively ruled out that possibility.

King Hussein and Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali have said that changes to

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Several earthquakes rock Middle East

AMMAN (J.T.) — A series of moderate earthquakes shook Jordan and northern Lebanon Tuesday, with the strongest registering 5.7 on the Richter scale, officials said. Quake reports also came from Egypt and Israel.

No injuries or damage were reported.

The Royal Scientific Society's (RSS) Building Research Centre recorded several medium-intensity tremors in the southwestern area of the Gulf of Aqaba and the Red Sea, according to the centre's director Faisal Al Sayyagh.

Dr. Sayyagh said 10 tremors were registered between 15:43 (12:43 GMT) and 19:30 (16:30 GMT).

The strongest was the first which measured 5.5 on the Richter scale, he said. He said the epicentre of the quake was located in an area 620 kilometres south of the RSS in Amman. The rest of the tremors, he said, measured between 4.55 and 5.1 on the Richter scale, and occurred consecutively with a time span of 10-15 minutes between them.

Dr. Sayyagh said the seismology centre has received telephone calls by citizens from Aqaba and Maan alarmed by the quakes.

The Richter scale is a gauge of the energy released by an earthquake, as measured by the ground motion recorded on seismograph. A quake of magnitude 3.5 can cause slight damage.

An earthquake of magnitude 5 can cause considerable damage in populated areas near the epicentre. A magnitude 6 cause severe damage.

Mohammad Jaradat, head of the Earthquake Studies Department at the Natural Resources Authority, said the country was witnessing a "storm of earthquakes."

The NRA report coincided with reports of quakes in Egypt, Israel and Lebanon.

Two earthquakes shook parts of Egypt, causing no damage but raising nerves in Cairo where a strong earthquake caused widespread death and damage less than a year ago.

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Palestinians stage strike to protest Lebanon assault

Combined agency dispatches

GAZA CITY, occupied Gaza Strip — Palestinians went on strike in Gaza City and the occupied West Bank towns of Ramallah and Nablus Tuesday over Israel's seven-day assault on guerrillas in Lebanon, correspondents reported.

The strike was called by 10 Damascus-based Palestinian groups who oppose the Middle East peace process to coincide with the visit of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

Shops and businesses closed in the three cities and traffic kept off the roads, but Palestinian labourers still travelled into Israel, correspondents said. Occupied Jerusalem and other centres were not affected.

The 10 groups charged that the "barbaric aggression" which left more than 145 Lebanese dead and 450 wounded last week, took place with "American cover."

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Islamic

Resistance Movement Hamas were among the groups.

Israeli soldiers shot and wounded an Islamic Jihad member and his brother in Gaza on Tuesday, Palestinian witnesses said.

Troops opened fire on 21-year-old Ashraf Assidi, who is wanted for several anti-Israeli attacks, and his brother Munir in a market at Rafah in the south of the strip.

Both were hit in the legs but managed to get away. The army later arrested Munir in a local hospital.

Meanwhile three young Palestinians attacked an Israeli settler with axes and knives at Deir Al Balah, but the man escaped with light wounds, military sources said.

The army said a group of Arabs, one armed with an axe, attacked the man while he drove a tractor near Deir Al Balah town. The man fled to a Jewish settlement where he received first aid. The army was searching for the attackers.

(Continued on page 5)

Beirut prepares to send army to South Lebanon

Combined agency dispatches

BEIRUT — Officials Tuesday discussed how the Lebanese army could help United Nations peacekeepers control guerrillas and possibly take over some U.N.-policed villages in South Lebanon, a government said.

The discussions followed a week-long Israeli offensive in South Lebanon that was intended to root out guerrillas who were staging attacks on Israeli targets.

The violence, which forced half a million Lebanese to flee their homes in the south, was ended by a U.S.-brokered ceasefire Saturday.

Norwegian Major-General Trond Furuhoide, commander of the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), conferred Tuesday with Foreign Minister Faris Bouez and army commander Gen. Emile Lahoud.

Mr. Bouez also met with U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker and told reporters the United Nations did not object to deployment of Lebanese troops in U.N.-policed areas and the United States was "doubtless willing to help bring this about."

Prime Minister Rafik Hariri has said U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Gbali had approved the deployment of Lebanese troops in the area of UNIFIL operations.

Gen. Furuhoide said he offered Mr. Bouez in Beirut full cooperation over the deployment plan.

Gen. Furuhoide swapped ideas with Gen. Lahoud on how to deploy the army in 70 villages inside the U.N.-policed zone bordering Israel's self-declared "security zone" in the south.

Official sources said Mr. Bouez told Gen. Furuhoide Lebanon wanted the 5,400-strong UNIFIL to maintain the level of its presence in the battered villages and work side by side with the Lebanese troops.

It was unclear when the deployment would take place.

Gen. Furuhoide appealed to civilians, especially children, to keep away from the many unexploded Israeli shells and rockets littering the area and to call in U.N. troops to defuse them.

President Elias Hrawi Monday ordered troops to secure villages in the U.N. zone. But the govern-



A woman hugs her child as she checks the debris of her house in the village of Ain Qana in South Lebanon Tuesday as a result of last week's bombardment carried out by Israeli forces (AFP photo)

ment denied the step was at the expense of pro-Iranian Hizbollah guerrillas.

Israel bailed its seven-day

pounding of the south on Saturday under a ceasefire which included "understandings" that Hizbollah would stop rocket attacks on northern Israel.

The army on Tuesday tightened its grip on areas of the south where they already had a presence north of the U.N.-held strip.

Military sources said Lebanese troops at checkpoints in the

southern edge of the Bekaa Valley had confiscated the sidearms of 12 Hizbollah members during the past 24 hours.

"UNIFIL is willing to cooperate with Lebanese troops and I am confident the United States supports this move and is doubtless willing to help bring this about," Mr. Bouez said.

"We do not see any hindrance in the co-presence of two forces entrusted with an identical mission, especially when these two

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The Embassy of the Kingdom of Belgium in Amman informs with deepest regret and profound grief that

His Majesty King Baudouin I, King of the Belgians,

died on Saturday 31st, July 1993 at Montril (Spain).

A register of condolences will be opened at the ambassador's residence Wednesday 4th., Thursday 5th., and Friday 6th. August 1993 between 2 and 4 p.m.



Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath Al Hassan Tuesday receives a donation to the Young Women's Muslim Association from delegates of the U.S.-based voluntary organisation called Medicine for Peace (photo by Boghos)

Visiting U.S. medical group makes donation to YWMA

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath Al Hassan Tuesday met with members of a delegation from Medicine for Peace, Mary Silverman and Kathleen Viola presented the Princess in her capacity as chairman of the Young Women's Muslim Association (YWMA), with a cash contribution on behalf of the Fellowship for Reconciliation for the Association to continue with its various projects.

This is one of many contributions that the fellowship has made to the association over the last few years.

Since the Gulf war ceasefire, Medicine for Peace, a voluntary medical organisation based in the U.S., has sent eight separate delegations to Iraq.

While there, Medicine for Peace has set up health clinics and taken 13 children to the U.S. for surgical treatment not available in Iraq because of the sanctions imposed by the U.N.

Ms. Silverman and Ms. Viola were in Amman on their way back from Iraq where they had returned an Iraqi child and her mother to their family following successful cardiac surgery in the U.S.

They were also involved in the running of health clinics and in identifying children to take to the U.S. for treatment.

The delegation will return in October with the director of Medicine for Peace, Michael Viola and other physicians and health workers.

They will conduct a study of health conditions in Sebomali and poor sections of Baghdad to determine the effects of the sanctions on the health of children.

The team will also take 5 children back to the U.S. for surgery.

Princess Sumaya stresses importance of modern technology to new graduates

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Sumaya Bint Al Hassan Tuesday attended the graduation ceremony of the 15th class of students from the Princess Sumaya College for Informatics, which is affiliated to the Royal Scientific Society (RSS).

Princess Sumaya delivered an address at the ceremony, highlighting the importance of acquiring knowledge in modern technology, namely in the computer-related areas.

She said the college has worked on raising the educational level of its students, as well as encouraging their creative thinking and scientific research.

She pointed out that there was a tangible increase in the number of local companies using computer technology in their work, adding that this has made Jordan a distinguished training centre in serving the Arab region in this field.

Congratulating the graduates and wishing them good luck in their future endeavours, Princess Sumaya also commended efforts extended by the RSS president and personnel in educational, scientific and research spheres.

RSS President Hani Mulki also delivered an address welcoming



Her Royal Highness Princess Sumaya Bint Al Hassan Tuesday awards certificates to the 15th class of students at a graduation ceremony at the Princess Sumaya College of Informatics (Petra photo)

the Princess and congratulating the graduates, saying that the 15th class raises the number of graduates from the college to 640 individuals specialising in computer technology.

All the college graduates, Dr. Mulki said, are now working in productive sectors in Jordan and other Arab countries.

The RSS president reviewed the establishment of the society and its goals which serve the development process in Jordan.

The Princess Sumaya College was established in 1977 to meet the Kingdom's needs in certain professions and to meet the society's development needs, he said.

Dr. Mulki announced that a new electronic engineering college will be established within the society, offering its students a bachelor degree after a five-year study period.

At the end of the ceremony Princess Sumaya distributed certificates to the graduates, who include students from 9 Arab countries.

Majali asks cabinet to follow-up on outcome of King's trip abroad

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali Tuesday briefed the Cabinet on the outcome of His Majesty King Hussein's latest tour abroad and his talks with the leaders of the United Kingdom, France and Turkey, requesting that the government follow up on the results of the trip.

Dr. Majali said that King Hussein had discussed with the leaders of the three countries several political and economic issues and reviewed developments in Jordan's relations with the three nations.

Furthermore, the King's discussions covered the peace process, the latest events in Lebanon, the Jordanian democratic process and Jordan's participation in the U.N. Peace-keeping forces now posted in Bosnia, Angola, Cambodia and Somalia.

The Prime Minister requested that the Council of Ministers follow up on the results of the King's visit, noting that Jordan is deeply satisfied with the revival of the strong, friendly relations with Turkey, thanks to the King's efforts.

In an airport statement upon his return to Amman Monday, King Hussein said that his visit to Turkey was good and that it was based on the close relations between the Kingdom and the Mediterranean state.

It was a good chance to enhance bilateral relations and open new scopes of cooperation with Ankara, the King said.

In his briefing to the Cabinet, Dr. Majali said officials and the media in France, Britain and Turkey had given prominence to His Majesty's visit and the Jordanian role in helping to bring about stability to the region and to help keep world peace.

He said the leaders of the three countries have praised Jordan's efforts towards democracy and political pluralism, serving, he said, as a successful example in the Arab World.

New office processes applications to export to Iraq

AMMAN (Petra) — Applications to export goods to Iraq are being processed at an office at the Customs Department in Amman, for approval by the United Nations Security Council's sanctions committee, according to an announcement by the Finance Ministry Tuesday.

A source at the Finance Ministry, which is in charge of the customs department, said the sanctions committee approves applications depending on the nature of the goods and whether there is a need for them in Iraq.

That means some goods which may have been approved for export earlier may not be allowed later. Neither the Ministry of Finance nor the customs department have the power to change the committee's decision.

The source said no fees are levied on the applications whether they are approved or not adding that there was no discrimination between one person or another or one application or another.

Islamic umbrella group calls for freezing all debate on confederation

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — An umbrella Islamic organisation Tuesday called on Jordanian and Palestinians to freeze all debate on confederation between them until an independent Palestinian state is created.

"Any discussion of confederation at this stage is like trying to build a ceiling without walls or like bargaining over the skin of a bear before the animal is hunted," said a statement issued by the Council of Islamic Organisations and Societies in Jordan.

The statement said that the definition of confederation meant relations between two independent, sovereign states "exercising their total freedom in their internal and external affairs."

"There cannot be a confederation between an independent, sovereign state (Jordan) and a land under occupation

planted with Israeli settlements beyond the control of the (proposed) Palestinian self-rule" authorities, it said.

In the present framework of Palestinian self-rule proposals for the five-year interim period in the Israeli-occupied territories, the Palestinian authority will be "nothing more than a municipal council which has no control over its defence and foreign affairs," said the statement.

The council, an umbrella organisation for over 110 Islamic societies, clubs and educational centres in Jordan, accused Israel and the U.S. of trying to raise the issue of confederation and "to impose it on Jordan in a bid to normalise (the Kingdom's) ties (with the Jewish state)."

It criticised the ongoing debate in the media over the confederation idea and said some of the comments made by senior Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials, "if they are true, reveal

behind-the-scenes dealings unknown to the people and which have mysterious implications for the future of Jordan."

It asked: "Is there a ready-made solution waiting to be imposed on Jordan when the time is ripe? Do the present negotiations aim at providing a cover and extracting further concessions and planning despair and frustrations in the hearts of the Arabs and Palestinians and compelling them to accept any solution as is being done to the people of Bosnia Herzegovina?"

Any confederation between Jordan and a Palestinian state should be the natural choice of the Jordanians and Palestinians expressed in a plebiscite, it added.

The Council of Islamic Organisations and Societies does not include political groupings, but includes anti-peace talks activists from political parties in their individual capacities.

However, sources say, unlike some of the groups which totally oppose any dealings with Israel, the council favours the creation of an independent Palestinian state based on the 1967 geography of the area.

The confederation idea reemerged after the PLO saw it as a means to break the logjam in the 21-month-old Middle East peace negotiations.

Jordan and the PLO, in line with an earlier agreement that the two banks of the River Jordan will have confederal ties in a post-peace process era, have formed joint committees to study the various aspects of a confederation.

But Jordan has repeatedly affirmed that any serious consideration of the idea should be based on the realisation that the implementation of the proposal could come only after the rights of the Palestinian people have been fully restored.

Jordan, Syria to explore sub-regional aquifer

AMMAN (J.T.) — An agreement signed in Damascus Sunday aims for cooperation in the exploration and drilling into the basaltic sub-regional aquifer shared between Jordan and Syria.

The agreement, signed by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Arab Centre for Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD), will allow for the investigation of the aquifer located in the volcanic border area between the two countries, where experts believe that underground water resources could prove to be abundant.

Jordan and Syria shall draft the project document and call for a joint meeting in which the two countries and other U.N. specialised agencies will participate.

The aim of the meeting shall be the discussion of the project document and agreement on procedures and arrangements for action.

The agreement also calls for preparing project documents on combating desertification in countries of the region. Such projects shall be initiated in Yemen, Oman and the United Arab Emirates, in coordination with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations

Environment Programme (UNEP).

It additionally stipulates that ACSAD, the International Centre for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA) and FAO cooperate towards holding an expert group meeting in 1994 on the management and sustainable development of the dry land in the Arab World.

The parties shall also cooperate in the development of a strategy for regional dry-land management and development for consideration and approval by the Council of Arab Ministers of Agriculture at its 1995 regular session.

Furthermore, the Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands will be in the steering committee to follow-up on ESCWA project entitled: "Assessment of Water Resources Using Remote-Sensing Techniques in the ESCWA Region" for the production of hydrological and hydrogeological maps.

The Royal Geographic Centre is expected to assist ESCWA and ACSAD in this project.

The agreement was signed by ESCWA Executive Secretary Suhail Bakajal and ACSAD Director General Mohammad Al Khesh.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Princess Alia to open art exhibit

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Bint Al Hussein Thursday will open at Esbelle Art Gallery an exhibition by Jordanian artist Bishara Najjar. The exhibition, which will last for 20 days, includes paintings on Jordanian-Palestinian heritage, Jordanian antiquities, Arab Jerusalem, rural life, horses and eagles.

JEA saves 311,000 tonnes heavy fuel

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) has saved the Kingdom 311,000 tonnes of heavy fuel by using natural gas from Al Rishbeh area to generate electric power, according to an informed source at the JEA. The source said the Kingdom's reliance on gas to produce electric energy will increase after the completion of a new gas-operated electricity-generating unit with a 30-megawatt capacity. With this station, the Rishbeh would contribute to 13 per cent of Jordan's consumption of electric energy, the source added.

Amman mayor meets with citizens

AMMAN (Petra) — Amman Mayor Mamdouh Al Abbad met Tuesday with citizens in Al Yarmouk area in the greater Amman region. Dr. Abbad was briefed by the Amman Municipal Council and representatives of citizens in the area on their needs and demands.

Editors review press' role

SALT (Petra) — The Balqa Culture Department Tuesday held a seminar on Jordanian press in which chief editors of the Arabic dailies Al-Dustour and Al-Shaab, Nabil Al-Sharif and Hashem Khreisat participated. Dr. Sharif said journalism is "a double responsibility" at the current stage.

The press should open their doors to the winds of democracy and should change their views of things," Dr. Sharif said. He said the media at the current stage in Jordan's history can contribute to public awareness in national and political issues. He warned that there was a fear that newspapers not owned by political parties could become the mouthpiece of one party and only promote it and ignore other parties, and urged the mass media to remain neutral. Mr. Khreisat dealt with the coming parliamentary elections saying candidates in the elections will focus in their platforms on the Middle East peace process. He called on the mass media to focus their coverage on daily issues of the people and public services problems.

Officials, traders fail to agree on safety of cheese consignment

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — More than two weeks after a consignment of cheese worth almost JD 500,000 arrived at the port of Aqaba, the argument between the customs authorities and the merchants over its legality rages on.

The shipment was declared unfit for human consumption by the Ministry of Health after a routine check revealed that temperatures inside the non-refrigerated containers had reached over 30 degrees centigrade.

Despite emphatic denials from the merchants, and a recent threat of court action, Health Minister Abdul Rahim Malhas was quoted in Al-Rai Arabic daily as saying, "the import regulation has not changed and we must stick to it. They are breaking a basic law of health."

The regulation, drafted by the Scientific Committee on Food (SCF), is widely understood by merchants.

The committee decided in the 1980s to allow cheese to be imported if its storage conditions complied with that recommended by the manufacturer.

There is, thus, no specific

temperature level laid down by the ministry.

Following this procedure, manufacturers were contacted by officials for their advice on the current shipment and agreed that the cheese had been exposed to hazardous high temperatures.

Having complained that the authorities should measure the temperature of the cheese and not the container, the merchants went on to demand that future testing should take place in Amman where the air is cooler.

Dr. Malhas maintained that "it doesn't matter if it is Amman or Aqaba, if the temperature is too high, it is against the law."

The problem is that at the centigrade levels measured in Aqaba, it is almost certain that bacteria will grow rapidly, rendering the cheese contaminated, even if at later stages the level drops to within the recommendations, officials say.

Subsequent tests will not necessarily register the existence of the bacteria. It is thus the view of the SCF that in these circumstances the produce should not be allowed to enter the country.

This stipulation was re-

flected by the director of Health Promotion Directorate, Mamoun Maabreh in an interview with the Jordan Times.

Reacting to demands to test the cheese, he asserted, "the regulations are the first step. If the temperature is within the limits, it can be tested (for other contamination). If it's not, it cannot."

The threat of court action was welcomed by Dr. Maabreh. "If they take the matter to court they will lose," he summarised, "and the legal precedent will make it easier for us to act quickly in the future." He went on to promise reform of the current regulations to create legally stipulated temperature levels.

The current confrontation looks set to continue while the merchants refuse to destroy or remove their consignment and the authorities refuse its entry.

There is, however, a positive side to this encounter. Dr. Maabreh pointed out that the case illustrates the increasing vehemence with which border checks are carried out and serves to remind importers that the cost-cutting methods of the past, which in some cases could be hazardous to public safety, will not be tolerated in the future.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

FILM

★ Feature film entitled "The Pink Panther" at the British Council at 7 p.m.

JERUSALEM FESTIVAL

★ Exhibition of paintings, posters, Palestinian costumes, books and other items on the holy city of Jerusalem at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation.

★ Seminar entitled "Arab Women — Role and Challenges" at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation at 6.30 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

★ Exhibition of a new collection of art works by Princess Wijdan Ali at The Gallery, Hotel Jordan InterContinental.

★ Exhibition of paintings by 25 Jordanian artists at the Housing Bank Gallery.

Jordan continues to suffer under illogical pressure

(Continued from page 1)

levels. In fact we are talking about \$1,000 to \$14,000 disparity between Jordanians (and Palestinians on the one hand and Israelis on the other). So when people speak of extremism based either on the politics or the economics of despair or the economics of the economic restructuring package, they have a right to say that unless and until the world recognises regional political economy, the losses of Jordan in the Gulf war ...

"The pressure on Jordan today, with the continued sanctions as recorded by the U.N., (means) we are talking of 100s of 100,000s of dollars every month.

"We feel that these pressures are illogical and if the intention is political then the international community should consider incentive rather than pressure for a country that has done so much for peace.

Q: Does the development of the country make differences of class? I mean for the middle and high class?

A: The returnees of course include entrepreneurs from the

middle class. But you are quite right. I referred earlier to the politics and economics of despair that when people speak of extremism, it is built on non-achievement economically. We believe that it is not welfare programmes that are going to rescue this situation and change it, whether it is unemployment or poverty, but a full activation of the economy. We believe that geographically Jordan is suited — we do have homeworks of improving legislation and regulations and opening to the world — (to) become an investment centre, particularly in new areas, but the fact is that Jordan is still blocked. Our exports in phosphates, for example, have almost halved and indeed our exports in fruits and vegetables are made impossible by the continuous blockade and the barriers that exist between us and the Gulf states.

Q: How is the relationship between Jordan and the Gulf states?

A: We are receiving increasing indications that individuals, governmental representatives, (and) private groupings would like to see Arab rapprochement. It is still a very personalised issue at the higher levels in some of the

Gulf states that Jordan took a position that they saw (as) supportive of Iraq. We have made it very clear that we are supportive of an inter-Arab solution and that we have had and will continue to have a deep concern for the welfare of the people of Iraq. After all one million children under the age of five may die during the next six months due to the lack of medicines or unclear water or lack of energy. Our hope is that the overwhelming problem, the common denominator between us all — extremism, poverty, (and) instability in the Middle East region — will sooner rather than later bring us into dialogue once again with the Arab countries.

Q: Jordan is the only Arab country which integrated the extremist religious party inside parliament. How do you see this experience?

A: We are not in the business of presenting a recipe for others. We have a highly intelligent, often conservative, electorate, and I think there has to be a distinction between politicisation of platforms, whether religious or ideological. The Jordanian people have generally been and will continue to be a centrist people.

Of course a large percentage of our population is Christian and this is often overlooked and I think there is great deal of mutual respect in a Jordanian modus vivendi which preceded parliamentary life and contributed to it. So I would say that it is the Jordanian way that there is a great deal of truth to the concept of the Jordanian family, or, as it is fondly called, Hussein's family.

Q: How do you see the relationship between Spain and Jordan?

A: I would hope that multilaterally the participation of Spain in the peace talks (and) in the conference of ministers and cooperation in the Mediterranean, which we geographically are a part of, that we see closer discussions and indeed (with) other concerned EC members over a more significant European role in the years ahead in peace-making in the Eastern Mediterranean and indeed in the broader Mediterranean region.

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Grassroots democracy is a necessity

HARDLY A day passes by without one senior official or another reminding us of the benefits and virtues of decentralisation. The prime minister, Abdul Salam Al Majali, has been busy lately touring various ministries and departments, urging ministers, under-secretaries and department heads to delegate power in order to provide better and prompt services to the people.

Dr. Majali's latest visit Monday was to the Ministry of Tourism, where, according to Petra news agency, he called for the right investment and for "involving manpower as partners in the process of development."

Only a few days earlier, newly-appointed governors were instructed to handle matters pertaining to their areas of jurisdiction without resorting to their main headquarters, the Ministry of Interior. What Dr. Majali and his colleagues seem to overlook and forget is that the civil service's shortcomings have been recognised a long time ago and that commissions have repeatedly been formed to address these shortcomings. Not only was a Royal Commission headed by then-prime minister Ahmad Obeidat in the early 1980's formed especially for that purpose, but more recently a ministerial committee was formed by ex-prime minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker also to address the issue. Neither of the panels produced the desired results. What appears to have been missed is that decentralisation can only be achieved through the transfer of power from the hands of appointed officials to the people. Preaching will not do.

What the country needs is to complete the process started by His Majesty the King in 1989: the full democratisation of government. Central governments in the most efficient regimes have always proven to be slow, clumsy and prone to corruption. Governors, mayors and other public servants must be elected by, and made accountable to the people. If the people were to take matters into their own hands, then they would have only themselves to blame if things go wrong. Meanwhile, the decades-old call for administrative reform continues to be valid. So far, what some ministries have been describing as administrative reform is certainly no more than cosmetic change.

The state in Jordan, as has been the case in most Third World countries, has, over the past four decades, regulated every aspect of people's life. This has caused people to become totally dependent on the state and unable to deal with their day-to-day problems. This becomes more apparent when each time officials visit any region of the Kingdom they are met by scores of people who demand that the central government address their needs. This state of affairs cannot continue. And it certainly cannot be addressed through lectures and seminars. What we need to do is build upon the relevant articles of the Constitution and the National Charter in order to devise new legal and legislative tools and mechanisms that would allow all Jordanians a full say in the running of affairs that affect their lives.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

KING HUSSEIN defended the Islamic faith in the face of an unjust Western-orchestrated campaign against the Muslims and their religion, said Sawt Al Shaab Arabic daily. In an interview with the BBC, said Sawt Al Shaab, the King noted that Western circles, in their attempt to find a new enemy following the collapse of communism have turned their guns towards the Muslims and their faith. Noting that Islam is the religion of tolerance, equality and justice, the paper said that Islam is and should remain free of all accusations relating to acts of violence, killing and extremism. King Hussein said in the interview that terrorism was encouraged by acts of injustice, ignorance, backwardness and onslaught on the rights of nations, and fomented by aggression on civilian population and their human rights, said the daily. The King has described such accusations levelled at Islam as desperate attempts to distort this religion and its sublime values and noble principles, added the daily. It is clear, said the paper, that the new colonialists and the invaders of Arab territory are describing national resistance against occupation as acts of terrorism because the national movements against them aim at ending occupation and injustice. In particular, the resistance of Israeli occupation in Palestine, it added, is the right of the Palestinian people and can by no means be described as an act of terrorism.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily Tuesday drew a contrast between the present tour of the U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in the Middle East and those of the former U.S. secretaries. Tareq Masarweh said that Mr. Christopher has come in the aftermath of the destruction on southern Lebanon and the plight of the civilian population there, like James Baker who came here with U.S. ideas about the peace process in the wake of the Gulf war and as Mr. Shultz did following Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982. The writer said that Washington wants to impose on the Arabs its own style of peace which serves its own interests and not stick policy with the Arabs in order to subdue them. He said that the U.S. Secretary of State's visits to the Arab region are to execute their plots in the Arab region. He said that the U.S. Secretary of State's visits to the Arab region are to execute their plots in the Arab region. He said that the U.S. Secretary of State's visits to the Arab region are to execute their plots in the Arab region.

Bosnian Muslims threaten international terrorism

By Juan Gasparini

GENEVA — In Bosnia-Herzegovina, there is always a price to pay — and the price for indecision may have consequences that reach far beyond the ill-defined borders of an ethnic war. Even the offer of 17,000 men to protect Muslim "safe havens" designated by the U.N. authorised at a meeting of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in Islamabad this month is likely to fall into the same political vacuum of indecision. In its search for a solution, Bosnia is looking to the world's other problem areas for an answer.

In the Bosnian war, a central problem for the West has been to define the varying degrees of responsibility of the Croats, Muslims and Serbs — who are, at the same time, all aggressors and all attacked. The situation continues to disintegrate into further conflict without borders to contain it. Even if peace by means of partition or through OIC protection were to take place, there is no guarantee that the fighting would end or that it will remain confined.

During a tour of European capitals to gain acceptance of the Bosnian viewpoint, Bosnian Foreign Minister Silajdzic revealed the lengths to which Bosnia is willing to go in its search for peace. A split developed between Silajdzic and the French, English and German governments when he touched a raw nerve — the threat of possible international terrorist attacks. It is a threat that may make the West finally take notice.

The threat initially surfaced in

discussions the Bosnian foreign minister held with French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe when the accusation of "complicity with the Serbs" came up. Mr. Silajdzic is known as a hawk in the team of Bosnian President Izetbegovic.

The terrorism argument was again discussed in a three-hour-long heated debate between Mr. Silajdzic and British Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd. The sensitive subject was broached yet again when U.S. Vice President Al Gore informed the Bosnians that the U.S. had changed its mind about lifting the arms embargo, which has had more

effect on Bosnian Muslims than on others in the region.

"We have to give the international conscience an electric shock," a hater, demoralised Bosnian Muslim member of the delegation at Geneva said. The threat of international terrorism fills the bill. According to him, Muslims in Bosnia have no way out other than "the same road the Palestinians took 20 years ago."

Palestinian actions, he explained, "forced the international community to begin negotiations with them. Radical Palestinians in those years set bombs, took hostages and hijacked airplanes

after Israel won the 1967 war." "We will not end up like the Kurds and the Armenians," the Bosnian diplomat adamantly insisted. "Our targets will not be the innocent. We will not make blind attacks. Rather, we will select those responsible for support given to the Serbian programme of genocide."

Another spokesman for the Muslim Bosnians in Geneva added, "Turkish and Palestinian volunteers are ready to infiltrate into Serbia and Croatia. Commando groups can slip like fish into water in European countries with large numbers of Muslims —

France, Germany, England and Belgium — mixing with the population."

"A list of objectives is already being prepared," the Bosnian spokesman said. At the top of the list is David Owen, who is "guilty of having taken the Serbian part in talks in Geneva and New York." He added, "Saudi Arabia has promised us financial support."

"After Cyrus Vance announced his withdrawal from the talks last February, Lord Owen forced us to sign the peace plan. It is now no more than a scrap of waste paper," said a very exasperated Muslim diplomat in Geneva. "The only thing Owen has achieved is to give the Serbs the time they needed to effect their 'ethnic cleansing'."

When Mr. Vance was replaced by Norwegian diplomat Thorvald Stoltenberg, who was to aid Lord Owen, the process of the resolution of the Balkan problem became viewed as more exclusively a European affair. The diplomatic front remains paralysed by the British, French and U.S. refusal to lift the arms embargo on Bosnia.

U.S. President Clinton is not prepared to participate in limited surgical air attacks and is withholding direct involvement of U.S. ground troops. "Opinion polls show that the American public is against intervention in Bosnia," a U.N. official explained. "The U.S. Congress will not authorise Clinton to involve the U.S. in the war — Republicans are against it, and Democrats are divided on the issue, so consensus is not possible in Congress."

Air attacks without a build-up

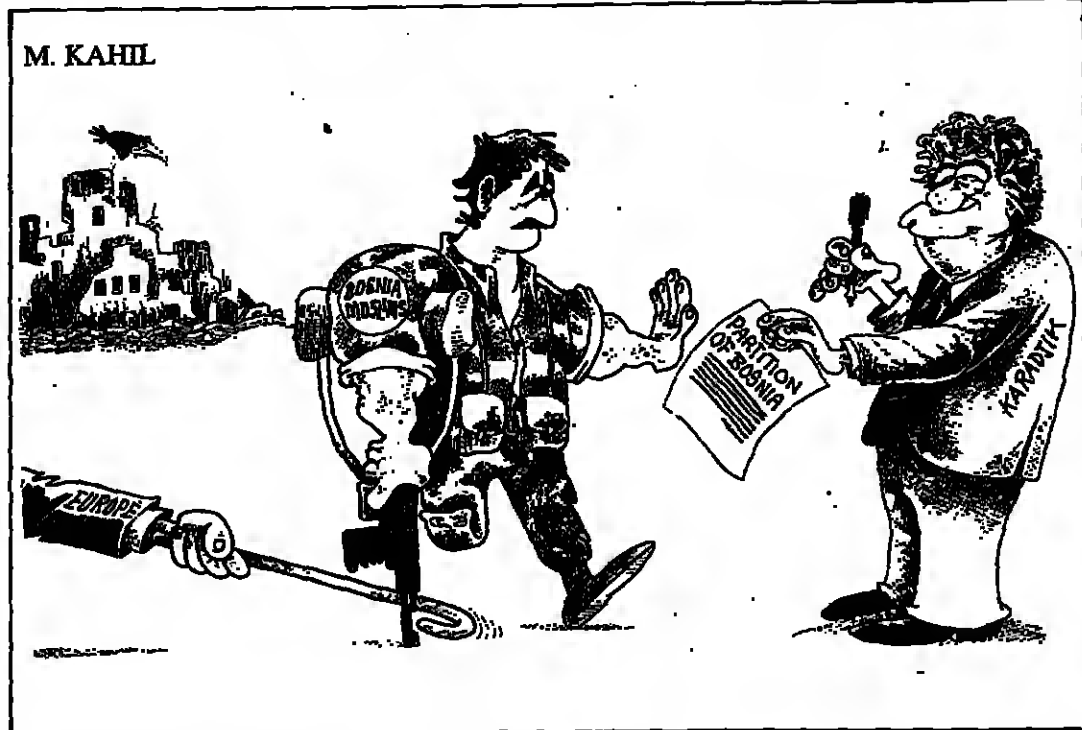
of ground forces would leave 23,000 U.N. troops presently on a humanitarian mission in the region defenseless in the face of Serbian counterattacks. U.N. functionaries at Geneva admit they have no new plans. "If one must prepare an air attack on the Serbs," explained one of the members of the Owen-Stoltenberg team, "that would mean becoming sitting ducks for the Serbs."

"Evacuation of U.N. troops would be a further admission of the impotence of the U.N.," he added. "The loss of human life in the past year and the millions of dollars spent would all have been for nothing."

Before the Bosnian war began, the Muslim population of Bosnia accounted for 44 per cent of the total population. Following expulsions, Muslims now occupy only 15 per cent of the territory.

As the fighting extends into summer with no end in sight, the vicious cycle of violence is becoming harder to contain. It seems to want to burst out of Bosnia-Herzegovina and expand in the direction of extremism.

The Palestinian analogy and the threat of international terrorism should not be dismissed as simply last-ditch posturing. Serbs took a first step in this direction with their promise to rain missiles on Italy, Austria, Britain and Germany if a "Storm" operation were to hit the Balkans as it did the Iraqi desert. Bosnians may be prepared to take another step in the same direction. Only the concerted effort of diplomats in Geneva is holding back such an apocalyptic scene in Europe — World News Link.



Heads begin to roll in ADL's networks

By Jeffrey Steinberg

Thomas Dine, the longtime executive director of the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), was forced to resign on June 28. His departure is the latest shakeup inside a Zionist lobby that has been fractured for the last year over scandals, power struggles, and major policy differences over the Middle East peace process.

Since the beginning of January, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith (ADL), the group most closely linked to AIPAC among all of the major American Jewish organisations, has been plagued by a spy scandal implicating league officials in the illegal possession of classified government files, the passing of spy data to the governments of Israel and South Africa, and the conducting of dirty tricks against as many as 950 U.S. activist groups. The ADL is the target of criminal investigations in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Virginia, and New York, and has been served with one class action civil suit, with a second civil suit by a number of Arab-American groups pending. San Francisco sources expect that criminal indictments will be handed down against a number of ADL officials and employees before the end of the summer.

Among the prime targets is the ADL's national "fact-finding" chief, Irwin Sull, of the league's New York City headquarters. Although he is not believed to be a target of any of the criminal investigations, ADL National Director Abraham Foxman is expected to be forced to resign as part of an ADL-designed "damage control" effort forced by the San Francisco scandal.

AIPAC versus the Rabin government

Underlying both the AIPAC and ADL scandals is a policy rift between the American Zionist leaders and the Labour Party government in Israel over how to deal with the Palestinian crisis.

Mr. Dine's resignation was ostensibly precipitated by remarks he made to an Israeli author six years ago, in which he referred to Orthodox Jews as "smelly." Mr. Dine's comments, included in a forthcoming book by David Landau, were reported in a recent issue of the Baltimore Jewish Times. Mr. Dine was quoted as saying: "I don't think mainstream Jews feel very comfortable with the ultra-Orthodox. It's a class thing, I suppose. Their image is — smelly. That's what I'd say now that you've got me thinking about it. Hasids and New York diamond dealers." Mr. Dine told Mr. Landau that major Jewish funders choose not to fly on Israel's national airline El Al because of "those people." He added, "Actually, I prefer Swissair or Lufthansa myself. But I fly El Al to Israel because it's direct. Yes, TWA flies direct, too. But it's low-class like the Orthodox. Yes, that's still the image. Still the poor

immigrant image. That's the perception of a lot of people I mix with."

The publication of Mr. Dine's comments provided the pretext for a number of AIPAC board members, who have been reeling from nearly a year of harsh criticism from Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin over their hardline pro-Likud policies during the 1980s, to bounce the man most associated with those policies. Last September, during his first trip to the United States since his election, Rabin met with AIPAC officials and lambasted them for their "right-wing" direction.

An even more direct indication of the rift between AIPAC's 1980s leadership and the Israeli government surfaced just after Mr. Dine's resignation, when the Washington Jewish Week, in its July 1 issue, published an attack by another AIPAC official, Vice President Harvey Friedman, on Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin.

Mr. Friedman led a spring 1993 delegation of three U.S. congressmen to Israel for talks with government officials about the future of the occupied territories. According to Mr. Friedman, Mr. Beilin told the visitor that Israel was prepared to return to its 1967 borders in order to reach a peaceful settlement. Israel foreign ministry spokesmen claimed that Mr. Beilin's comments were more vague and only reflected a subject that the Israeli government was willing to put on the table.

In response, Mr. Friedman told the Washington Jewish Week's Larry Kohler: "This little slime ball can say he didn't say it, but three congressmen will affirm that it's just what he said."

Within a day of the story hitting the newsstands, Mr. Friedman was "forced to resign" from AIPAC, and the group's new president, liberal Democrat Steve Grossman, apologised for Mr. Friedman's "outrageous statements."

On July 4, Mr. Beilin denounced AIPAC: "The firing of Harvey Friedman came on a much more grave background, the transformation of AIPAC in recent years into a right-wing Jewish organisation." Mr. Beilin told Israel Radio that most of the official Jewish organisations are now run by extremists whose views on the Middle East peace process and many other issues are at odds with the vast majority of American Jews, who are more "moderate, liberal, pragmatic" than their leaders.

Sources say that top officials of both the Israeli and U.S. administrations agree that the leaders of the ADL and AIPAC are a major impediment to the peace process. According to these sources, further purges and scandals can be expected. Foxman, they say, is considered, along with Mr. Dine, to be one of the key figures who steered the official American Zionist lobby into the anti-peace camp associated with Likud figures like Ariel Sharon — Executive Intelligence Review.

Military likely to stay in charge in Nigeria

By Tunde Obadina

Reuters

LAGOS — Military President Ibrahim Babangida is likely to remain in power beyond August 27, the date he promised to return Nigeria to civilian rule, after opting for an interim government in place of a rush election.

"Babangida will still be there. We are still in an endless transition to civil rule," House of Representatives Member Tokumbo Aikuyomi told Reuters.

"It's like Jesus Christ's second coming. Promised for so long but no-one except the lord knows when it will happen," he added. General Babangida has promised to relinquish power on August 27 after three times delaying his return to civilian rule programme since it started in 1986.

The general told leaders of Nigeria's two political parties on Saturday in the capital Abuja that an interim government to conclude the transition process was necessary following the annulment of the June 12 presidential elections.

"We should... see the interim government as a consensus arrangement for concluding the transitional agenda of this administration, which was disrupted by the imperative need to nullify the June 12 presidential elections," Gen. Babangida said.

The government's cancellation of the poll plunged Africa's most populous nation into its gravest political crisis in a decade and threw Gen. Babangida's political programme into disarray.

Details of the stopgap government, including its tenure, will be worked out by Vice-President Augustus Aikhomu, a retired admiral, officials of the two parties and Ernest Shonekan, who heads a Transitional Council now running day-to-day government.

Gen. Babangida said the interim arrangement was adopted after it became clear it was not feasible to hold new polls this month. His speech did not make clear the future role of the military in the government, nor did it contain his usual assurances that he plans to step down on August 27.

"The option of an interim national government should be seen for what it is. It is an interim measure and must to that extent be used to perpetuate his rule," Gen. Babangida said. Gen. Babangida, in power since 1985, first considered the idea of an interim government three weeks ago and then jettisoned it, saying his civilian successor had to be chosen by a fresh election.

Last week the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC) jointly proposed to the government that an interim government be formed because it was not feasible to hold fresh elections in time for an August 27 handover.

"Our proposal was for an interim government to take over from the military August 27," SDP National Publicity Secretary Amos Idakula told Reuters.

"The interim government is not our brainchild. It is the idea of the military," he said. Nigeria's pro-democracy groups and many prominent figures are likely to oppose any move by the military to extend its stay in power.

The cancellation of the last poll on grounds of malpractice led to protests in Mr. Abacha's home region in southwestern Nigeria in which more than 100 people were killed.

More protests are planned by the Lagos-based Campaign for democracy, an anti-military rule pressure group whose leaders are detained in Abuja.

LETTERS

To be or not to be clear

To the Editor:

In an article entitled "The meaning of freedom", Mrs. E. Yaghi is concerned with the important concept of freedom. I think her attempt to clarify such a complex concept deserves respect, but unfortunately it falls into many philosophical traps.

It is rather common than when one tries to define a philosophical concept, one ends up with confusing not only himself/herself but others as well. I am the first to admit that after reading Mrs. Yaghi's article I experienced a sort of a mental cramp. The purpose of this letter is to examine three ideas from Mrs. Yaghi's commentary to show that her account of the concept of freedom is not clear.

One of the first puzzling sentences occurs in the second paragraph. Mrs. Yaghi says, "freedom is the essence of man, his identity and his inalienable God-given right." The thought this sentence expresses is problematic because it connects the theological concept "God" with the meaning of the word freedom. Is it the case that the concept of freedom is necessarily tied up with theological concepts? I think that the answer is no. This connection can be made in the context of three great monotheistic religions, but such connection is absent in some eastern religions and non theistic philosophies, e.g., the philosophy of Sartre. I think the question that Mrs. Yaghi ought to answer is this: If the concept of freedom is not connected to theology, does it follow that it is devoid of meaning?

Moving on then to the fourth paragraph of Mrs. Yaghi's article we confront the second puzzle. This paragraph starts with true remarks about how the man of modern age is a slave to technology, then this remark is followed by another that says that man is also a slave to social norms. The shift that occurs does not make clear the relationship between "being a slave to technology" and "being a slave to social norms". An answer might be: both sentences are saying something about slavery, but such a response is not acceptable because, in an important sense, being a slave to a machine is different from being a slave to accepted social norms. To put it in simple terms, there is no doubt that we depend heavily on technology, but social norms, not machines, shape our moral outlook. In short, because the meaning of the word slave is not the same in both contexts, it is not clear how these two sentences are related.

Furthermore, in the same paragraph Mrs. Yaghi writes "man is a slave to social norms whether good or bad. Often decisions are taken with the fear of: 'What would my friends or relatives say if I wrong and will it be beneficial to others?'"

Although the point that Mrs. Yaghi makes is important, she fails to explain what she means by the words "right" and "wrong". Are the concepts of right and wrong higher in status from them? What is a source that helps us decide between right and wrong? Social norms, constitutions or religions? Mrs. Yaghi's turn affects her explanation of the meaning of freedom.

The final puzzle that struck me occurs in the last paragraph. Mrs. Yaghi says: "The freer the society in terms of humaneness, the more likely its members are to be people of creative, individual, inquisitive and imaginative minds."

The first problem with this sentence is that it gives the self-evident; however, such a word is mysterious and open to many interpretations. What is covered by the word "humaneness" in one culture may come under the word "cruelty" in the belief that there is a causal relationship between living in a free society and being creative. I don't know how such a causal relationship can be established. Empirically, the majority of people who live in free societies cannot be described as creative; rather, the majority consists of ordinary people trying to make a living. In contrast, many creative thinkers lived in oppressive environments because the meaning of the word creativity is in fact vague and needs clarification; therefore, I think that such a remark is not helpful in clarifying the meaning of freedom.

In any event, although in my opinion Mrs. Yaghi did not succeed in clarifying the meaning of the concept of freedom, it is criticism will inspire her to make her insights clearer.

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The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.



Risk and acts of courage, like this walk in space on Jan. 17, 1993, by astronaut Greg Burchard (left) who carries fellow Endeavour crewman Mario Runco, could, maybe, get the excitement back in NASA's projects which seems to stir little interest since the end of the cold war (AFP photo)

With grandeur gone, NASA's friends have dwindled

By Harry F. Rosenthal
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — It was 1969 and three men had just returned from the moon. They got parades and medals and a presidential dinner. Their hum-stuffed space capsule was hauled around to all 50 state capitals, escorted by highway patrolmen with the reverence and awe accorded to old glory herself. People lined up for hours just to see the thing.

It was history and triumph and the United States was No. 1.

Fast-forward to 1993.

Apollo is history. Skylab is forgotten and the space shuttle has flown 57 times since 1981. No hum.

With the tragic exception of Challenger, all launches and landings look the same — up and down, up and down — and network television long ago quit carrying them live. Ask the man on the street to name a current astronaut and get a blank stare.

For nine years, there's been a boring debate in Washington: Does the United States need a space station? Last month, in Congress, the no-sayers came within one vote of killing the project.

Where have all of National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA's) friends gone?

In the 1960s, NASA could do no wrong. It had the whole country in its corner and the goal was simple: beat the Soviets.

Nobody's head rolled when the early rockets blew up or when John Glenn failed 10 times to get off the ground before becoming the first American to orbit earth or when NASA spent \$26 billion to get 12 men onto the moon.

"NASA was a creature of the

cold war," said Don Fuqua, the former chairman of the House Space Committee and now president of the Aerospace Industries Association. "When the Berlin wall came down, there no longer was this enemy out there that we had to compete with."

The bleachers where the cheerleaders once sat now are filled with critics.

One of them, a congressman, told his colleagues recently that NASA had led them around by the nose for years and "hamboozled" Congress. Even NASA acknowledges it underestimated costs and overpromised results.

That was just one of the many confidence-eroding circumstances.

The Challenger disaster, which killed seven astronauts on the 25th shuttle flight, was "an accident rooted in history," according to investigators who concluded the agency had gotten sloppy.

The Hubble space telescope's inability to see to the edge of the universe as promised was due to careless miscalculation. The \$1.4 billion Galileo space probe to Jupiter is handicapped because its main antenna is jammed.

On its 12th anniversary, the space shuttle fleet was on only its 54th mission; NASA had promised up to 400 by then. The shuttles have proved to be cantankerous, finicky and expensive.

In 1989, on the 20th anniversary of the first moon landing, President Bush announced a 30-year programme that would see a U.S. colony on the moon and an expedition to Mars.

But nothing more has been heard of that \$500 billion-plus

proposal.

Where have all of NASA's friends gone?

The NASA Alumni Association recently began talking about staging an event next year to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the moon landing. It dropped the idea for lack of interest.

"The pioneering days of space are simply over. Even a Mars landing doesn't have nearly the appeal that a moon landing had," says Walter Cronkite, an unabashed booster in the space programme's early days when he covered flights for CBS Television Network.

A young congressman from New Jersey, Dick Zimmer, has led the fight against the space station.

"I consider myself a friend of NASA," he says. "I think I'm giving it tough love."

Where have all of NASA's friends gone?

As a candidate, Bill Clinton was a friend of the space station but as president he practiced "tough love" too, ordering NASA back to the drawing board.

Since 1984, when Ronald Reagan proposed it, the station's expected costs climbed from \$8 billion to \$31.3 billion by NASA's own estimate.

Even that, said the General Accounting Office, was low. The station would cost at least \$40 billion to build and more than \$100 billion to operate over its 30-year planned lifetime.

Mr. Clinton gave NASA administration Daniel Goldin new marching orders: cut the cost in half. Mr. Goldin had the station redesigned and downsized and Mr. Clinton adopted a version he said would save \$18 billion.

But that didn't stop the naysayers in Washington.

"The price tag is out of this world," said Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney of New York. "One hundred billion dollars for a motel in space when we have an infant mortality rate in Harlem that rivals many Third World countries."

"NASA's problem is that for a long time they took their friends for granted," said Rep. Robert Walker, the Republican leader of the House Space Subcommittee.

On one house roll call, the station survived by a single vote, 216-215.

"They like space and they like the idea of space but are not

willing to spend the billions that NASA wants to spend on it," says Howard Benedict, executive director of the Mercury Seven Foundation.

Can NASA get the excitement back?

"I don't think it can. Going to the moon was a one-time thing. There will never again be an adventure like that, even going to Mars," Mr. Benedict says.

It is indisputable that when NASA is doing spectacular things, the interest revives. All the television networks, with their millions of viewers, watched fascinated when three astronauts caught a huge satellite in their gloved hands last year after days of trying to capture it the way it had been rehearsed.

NASA's friends surely will be watching in December or January when the agency undertakes its most challenging mission in years, repair of the Hubble telescope.

It will involve that magic formula: risk, acts of great courage and potential calamity.

"Hubble is a very bold mission," says Administrator Goldin. "This is the type of thing Americans are about. They love it."

Mark Albrecht, who ran the Bush administration's National Space Council, thinks naysayers are always present when it comes to spending money on space research. Their voices are muted, he says, when NASA is engaged in missions and projects that are captivating.

"When we stop talking and fiddling and start building the space station, with construction measured in a few years, it's got the potential of getting people excited," he says. "We post-World War II Americans have space wired in our primary fabric."

NHF projects expand grassroots participation in development

THE STEEP rugged mountains increasingly dotted with green spots of fertile land as they creep into the Zarqa River basin to the east of Jerash seem to project a paradoxical image in which challenges and promises intertwine. Nowhere in that area of Jordan has the story of man's penchant to conquer his surrounding environment been so clearly manifested as in this 700-member community of Ghneih where a blend of strong enthusiasm for socio-economic change, of rich local resources and of zero services has convinced Noor Al Hussein Foundation that behind that disharmony-laden landscape there lies a promise that can indeed be fulfilled.

A cow-raising scheme

Quality of Project Director Issam Zawawi says a Village Development Council (VDC) and neighbourhood committees, supported by technical committees representing concerned institutions have been set up to tap local human and material resources and pool them towards the overall development of the community. One of the major activities sponsored by the project in Ghneih has been a cow-raising scheme through which 10 local families have received one high-yield cow each from the NHF Project to raise and utilize their dairy products in enhancing their out-earnings and/or obtaining additional income. Cows are distributed as loans to be paid back to the project in the form of newly-born heifers which will subsequently be handed over to other beneficiary families in what seems to be a "revolving fund" of cows.

with free veterinary services in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture.

In addition to the cow-raising scheme, the project also sponsors small-scale agricultural activities to help local residents utilize their home gardens and unexploited plots of land. Seeds and saplings of different vegetables and fruit trees have been distributed to about 65 beneficiary families in the community.

A mothers' club and kindergarten

Because the philosophy of the project stresses socio-economic development in its activities, special attention has been given to enhancing the status of women in the village to enable them to become active participants in their own development and that of their families and community. A 50-member mothers' club has been established and has been involved in the education of mothers on matters relating to family health, sanitation, nutrition and the environment. A three-month sewing training course has also been launched for young women in the village in cooperation with the local village council.

other 11 communities in Jordan seems to be intended to serve mainly as a catalyst for change. "We have gone a long way in educating, training, and organising the local population, and now it is their turn to assume responsibility for their own development," says Mr. Zawawi. The head of Ghneih Village Council, Ali Ziyoud, says further efforts are needed to change people's conceptions of loans as charity, of voluntary community work as "none of their business" and of unconventional income-generating schemes as not cost-effective.

The project was first initiated in Jordan by the Noor Al Hussein Foundation in 1989 in cooperation with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Ministry of Health. Its primary objective is to introduce a dynamic innovative development programme that would improve the total quality of life for underprivileged individuals and communities throughout Jordan.

By the end of 1992, over 10,000 persons benefited directly and indirectly from the project in eight communities throughout Jordan. Four more communities have been encompassed by the project's service this year.

The Noor Al Hussein Foundation hopes to introduce the Quality of Life Project as a national model for socio-economic development in Jordan. It is already recognised by WHO as a regional training model. In addition to its WHO funding, the project has received donations from the U.S.-based Christian Children's Fund (CCF), Spanish "World in Harmony" and the government of Luxembourg, in addition to private Jordanian contributions.

A pioneering experiment

The Quality of Life Project's experiment in Ghneih as well as in



Children in a kindergarten and cow-raising — two projects sponsored by the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) (file photos)



VACANCY FOR PROFESSIONAL WOMEN UNDER A REGIONAL U.N. PROJECT ON "STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS FOR ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT FOR WOMEN"

Closing date: 25 August 1993
National Project Director
Amman-Jordan
Duration: 1 Year Fixed Term Initially
Expected Date: October 1993

Duties & Responsibilities:
Under the general supervision of the regional chief technical adviser, the national project director will, in accordance with the established procedures, assume the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Undertake planning, directing and organising activities relative to the achievement of the project's objectives on the basis of the project proposal, findings of the baseline research, strategic planning recommendations.
 2. Translate into specific plans and work programmes the project's operational framework.
 3. Assist in identifying/recruiting the core staff of the project as well as National Consultants/Resource Persons.
 4. Prepare and organise the project's annual strategic planning workshops.
 5. Prepare and organise the project's training programme on entrepreneurship including the study tour.
 6. Coordinate the various activity components of the project and ensure complementarity of efforts between and among collaborating agencies.
 7. Negotiate terms of agreement with various universities and qualified institutions for the implementation of the project's baseline research.
 8. Oversee the organisation/implementation of various training and information/business advisory activity components of the project.
 9. Oversee the preparation of information/training materials to be developed/produced by the project.
 10. Negotiate agreements with national financial/banking institutions regarding the opening of loan windows for women.
 11. Contribute to the identification/formulation of strategic approaches that will ensure sustainability of project's goals.
 12. Establish quarterly work plans and produce progress reports.
 13. Monitor and evaluate impact of project activities on the target group and on participating/support institutions.
 14. Produce technical reports documenting project results and experience.
 15. Prepare annual and final reports on project activities and results to be submitted to the evaluation mission.
 16. Perform other duties as required.
- Qualifications & Experience:**
- ★ Advanced university degree in social sciences or a relevant discipline, knowledge of international development initiatives and experience in gender and development issues.
 - ★ Knowledge of local women NGOs, programmes, initiatives and networks.
 - ★ 8-12 years of previous experience in development related field(s) and the private sector (business entrepreneurship management).
 - ★ Full working knowledge of English and Arabic is required. Knowledge of French is an asset.
 - ★ Initiative and sound judgment. Ability to work in harmony and liaise with different local agencies.

Interested candidates should submit detailed CV to P.O. Box 35286 not later than Aug. 25, 1993.

Earthquakes

(Continued from page 1)

The first tremor struck at 3:32 p.m. (12:32 GMT) and a second at 3:43 p.m. (12:43 GMT), according to Egypt's Helwan observatory. It measured the initial shock at 4.3 on the Richter scale and the second one at 5.2.

There were seven mild aftershocks, according to Adel Ezz, minister of scientific research.

Egypt's Middle East News Agency (MENA) said there were no reports of damage or injuries. Residents of Sharm Al Sheikh on the Red Sea and Assiut in southern Egypt also felt two shocks.

Israel Radio said the tremors were felt from Eilat in southern Israel to central areas. A first tremor originated in the Red Sea 130 kilometres (78 miles) south of Sharm Al Sheikh and registered 5 on the Richter scale, the radio said.

Other seismologists reported higher readings. The Uppsala University in Sweden said the quake registered 6.1 on the Richter scale, and the U.S. Geological Survey's earthquake information centre in Colorado said it was 6.0.

Rutger Wahlstrom, head of Uppsala University's seismological department, explained the differences in readings by saying "local Richter scales with small variations" are in use in different regions. He said Richter readings were often more accurate the farther recorded from the earthquake's centre.

A series of mild earthquakes rattled north Lebanon Tuesday, with the strongest registering 4.6 on the Richter scale. The Lebanese meteorological agency said.

Protest Strike

(Continued from page 1)

Ten Palestinians were wounded Monday evening, including eight during a sloop by Israeli soldiers on a mosque in the Gaza Strip, Palestinian sources said.

The Israeli troops raided the Al Qassim mosque at Beit Lahya following an attack on a car in which a member of the Israeli military administration was killed and six other Israelis wounded.

The mosque is a stronghold of the Islamic Jihad organisation which claimed responsibility for the attack.

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AMMAN JORDAN

Growing protectionism draws Arab Gulf states to GATT

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Growing world protectionism and the emergence of giant economic blocs are forcing wealthy Arab Gulf states to join the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), officials and economists said Tuesday.

Kuwait is the only Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) state to join the Geneva-based group, becoming a member in 1984, but Saudi Arabia applied last month and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is considering following suit.

Officials from the three countries and the remaining GCC members — Bahrain, Oman and Qatar — will listen to the benefits offered by GATT when its experts highlight its activities at a seminar to be held in Abu Dhabi soon.

"We have asked GATT to organize this seminar to identify its objectives and how we can get a membership," UAE economy and trade ministry acting undersecretary, Mohammad Al Mezaiki, told the local daily Al Khaleej.

"The discussion will focus on the benefits we will get regarding world trade in case we join GATT. But we already know such a membership will provide us with the opportunity to partici-

pate in international trade negotiations and present our views to serve our interests," he said.

The GCC's growing interest in GATT comes amidst complaints about increasing protectionism in major world economic groups at a time when the six members argue they impose only token customs tariffs on imports.

The Gulf states' main dispute is with their top economic partner, the European Community (EC), which they accuse of blocking access to their petrochemicals and of seeking similar measures against their vital crude exports through the proposed carbon tax.

The tax would levy \$3 on an imported barrel of oil and it would rise gradually to \$10 by the year 2000. GCC states and other producers have attacked the tax on the grounds it would hit demand for oil and depress their earnings, already sharply down because of weak oil prices.

The proposed tax has cast a shadow over their strong relations and could hamper progress in their petrochemical negotiations, which they started more than five years ago. GCC states are demanding free access to the EC market but the Europeans fear this could hurt their petrochemical industry.

"In the light of the new world

order and the growing trend for protectionism and regional economic alliances, Gulf states should get closer together and join GATT as a forum for settling trade disputes," said Yusuf Khalifa Al Yusuf, economics professor at the Emirates University.

Trade accounts for nearly two thirds of the GCC's Gross Domestic Product, standing at around \$110 billion in 1992, when the GDP reached \$169.5 billion. Oil and gas form the bulk of that trade.

In a recent study, the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) urged the GCC and the other members of the Arab League to join GATT and work with the group's developing members to face protectionism and emerging economic giants.

"Arab states should work with other developing nations to ensure the success of the GATT round of negotiations so it will lead to multi-national trade order that enables the developing countries to exploit their industrial and export potentials," the Abu Dhabi-based fund said.

It said protectionism in a single EC market would depress Arab exports by 30 per cent and this would "create a new obstacle for economic reforms and development efforts in the region."

French, Germans seek unity after monetary breakup

PARIS (R) — French and German finance ministers met to try to patch up their differences Tuesday after weekend arm-wrestling led to the effective breakup of the European exchange rate mechanism (ERM).

The French stock market meanwhile showed its disappointment that the loosening of links among European currencies had not led France to cut interest rates immediately, giving up some of the gains it made Monday.

The Bundesbank shaved its key money market rate to 6.80 per cent Tuesday while France left short-term rates unchanged, helping the franc to rebound to 3.4950 against the mark at 1050 GMT after falling as far as 3.5305 Monday.

"What we really want to know is whether the French will tie themselves to the Germans still and keep their rates high," said one Paris Bourse trader. "If they

do then we are going to see a massive sell-off."

"Look at what everyone said yesterday — monetary stability is the priority. If that is the case, clearly there is not much room for sharp rate reductions," he added.

The German finance and economics ministers, Theo Waigel and Guenther Rexrodt, and Bundesbank President Helmut Schlesinger arrived to a salvo of abuse from French editorialists, who blamed Germany for the collapse of European monetary stability.

Le Figaro, the newspaper closest to Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, accused Bonn of causing the crisis in the European monetary system by imposing high interest rates on everyone to meet the astronomical cost of German unification.

But it said despite the setback the Balladur government now had a freer hand to try to pull France out of recession.

Economy Minister Edmond

Alphandery, greeting Mr. Schlesinger, at the start of the regular economic talks, told reporters that Franco-German relations remained "excellent."

But Bank of France Governor Jacques de Larosiere stalked into the finance ministry in gloomy silence.

Ministers stuck publicly to Mr. Balladur's line that France had not devalued and would still pursue monetary stability.

But political sources said at least one cabinet member, Small-Business Minister Alain Madelin, who called last December for the franc to be floated, was pressing privately for sharp interest rate cuts to help pull the economy out of recession.

French voters care more about record unemployment than about the franc's stability, advocates of easy money argue.

Traders said failure to cut interest rates might further weaken

the franc, which has lost about 20 per cent against the mark, by compromising hopes of an economic recovery.

Influential U.S. fund manager George Soros told Le Figaro newspaper that lower interest rates would boost confidence in the franc. But if France continued with its "dogmatic" insistence on monetary stability, the franc would keep falling.

"If the government carries on giving priority to monetary stability, it will continue to fall," he said.

A former top finance ministry official said: "The Bank of France has to replenish its reserves, which must have been sorely depleted in defending the franc last week, before it will cut rates. But I'm sure you will see France cutting rates soon. Otherwise what purpose has all this served?"

The defeat of the ERM by

speculators marks a low point in Franco-German ties, already strained by differences over the GATT world trade talks and Western policy in former Yugoslavia.

The loosening of the bands linking most European Community currencies caused relief in Bonn but dejection in Paris.

The German media was delighted that Germany had prevailed and would no longer be obliged to spend billions of marks intervening on currency markets to defend weaker ERM currencies.

Happiest by far was the mass circulation Bild newspaper, which has waged a war of words against plans in the Maastricht treaty for a single European currency.

"Euro-money is stone dead — burra, the mark is still there," Bild screamed in a front-page headline.

Fund managers steal show from banks in ERM crisis

LONDON (R) — The enduring image from this summer's foreign exchange mayhem may not turn out to be frenzied traders screaming down telephone lines. Rather, it could become the standard executives in charge of institutional funds.

"It's becoming much more widely known, or accepted, that it's not the bank dealers who are in pole position in terms of being speculators," said David Clark, president of the Association Cambiste Internationale (ACI), the foreign exchange trade group.

The focus of attention, he says, is on the fund managers and there are several reasons why. "Banks operate within very strict internal limits and they work within very strict central

bank limits," said Mr. Clark, who heads the Paris-based ACI. "This is not the case of fund managers."

Institutional funds still account for a fraction of the flows in the spot currency market, but the share is growing.

The Bank for International Settlements (BIS) in its latest report estimated daily spot market turnover of some \$880 billion, with the bulk of this coming from banks.

"The evidence seems to suggest, however, that transactions with other market participants have expanded more rapidly than those between dealers," the BIS said.

Cash movers like George Soros, president of Soros Fund

Management, have transfixed the markets and the media. Banks, on the other hand, have been taking a low profile.

They were burned last year by bad publicity from the autumn European currency crisis that first rocked the exchange rate mechanism (ERM) and paved the way for the currency grid's revamp Monday.

"The market has been conscious of its image since last September," Mr. Clarke said.

Many banks would not talk about ERM-based trading, with traders citing the uproar after sterling's exit from the ERM.

The evening of the pullout, on Sept. 16, 1992, one bank dealer boasted in a television interview of the money made on the pound.

The image of the smiling foreign exchange dealer cashing in at the expense of the taxpayer became a symbol of the event.

So this time banks shunned the chance to talk about whatever they may have made from their own positions, which are taken by so-called proprietary trading desks.

That is not to say they did not make money in other ways.

"Banks do well when there is heavy trading activity," said Patrick Foley, chief economic adviser at Lloyds Bank here. "Generally they don't take big open positions themselves, but obviously they do well through the commissions they earn."

European Community finance

ministers agreed early Monday to widen the fluctuation bands for all the ERM currencies except the mark and guilder to 15 per cent. Previously, they were limited to either 2.25 or six per cent bands.

The news capped weeks of mounting pressure on the grid, during which European central banks spent billions trying to prop up the French franc, Danish crown and other currencies.

"Volatility in general is good," said Christian Dunis, foreign exchange adviser at Chemical Bank in London. "As far as one can say the past few days have been relatively high volume, this has obviously been a good sign (for earnings)."

Australia budget to raise taxes and cut spending

CANBERRA (R) — Australian Treasurer John Dawkins revealed Tuesday that the budget for the year ending June 30, 1994, would include a double dose of bitter medicine — higher taxes and spending cuts.

"We have now got to the point where we should be tightening up on fiscal policy over the next few years," Mr. Dawkins said.

"It's in the context of what's been happening in Europe, I think we're likely to see in the years ahead more emphasis being given to fiscal policy," he said in a radio interview.

He reiterated that the government aimed to have the 1993/94 budget deficit come in at around 16 billion Australian dollars (\$11 billion).

"There will be tax increases as

well as expenditure cuts in order to achieve those fiscal objectives," he added.

Mr. Dawkins would not comment on reports that the defence department faced major cuts.

The Sydney Morning Herald reported Tuesday that the treasury aimed to slash up to 200 million Australian dollars (\$137 million) from a defence budget of nearly 10 billion Australian dollars (\$6.8 billion).

"We have reviewed every portfolio and every portfolio has made a contribution to the fiscal task. Defence like every portfolio has been asked to undertake a review of its expenditure but beyond that I won't go," Mr. Dawkins said.

The Herald said defence cuts

would be phased in over several years but were a key plank in a major round of spending cutbacks.

Mr. Dawkins told Australian Broadcasting Corp the budget, to be presented to parliament on Aug. 17, would make a sober assessment of the Australian economy's prospects.

But he said private forecasts for gross domestic product to rise about two per cent in the year to next June were "a bit low."

Economic growth for the year to March was 2.5 per cent.

Australia's economy was likely to receive a boost from rising commodity prices following disarray in the European exchange rate mechanism, Mr. Dawkins said.

Motown acquisition rockets Polygram to top music slot

AMSTERDAM (R) — Music company Polygram N.V. Tuesday said it was buying Motown Records, the biggest name in American black pop music, in a deal which could boost the Dutch firm into the number one slot in the music industry.

The \$301 million acquisition — which Polygram will effectively pay for by issuing 10 million new shares — will give the enlarged group control of recordings by classic black artists like Diana Ross, Stevie Wonder and the late Marvin Gaye.

Motown, which had 1992 sales of \$134 million, is currently owned by U.S. private investment partnership Boston Ventures. Polygram declined to comment on its profitability.

"I believe this certainly makes Polygram, world number one," said Machgiel Bakker of Music Media, the European subsidiary of U.S. trade magazine Billboard.

Los Angeles-based Motown

was founded in Detroit in 1959 by legendary record producer Berry Gordy and brought hits like Smokey Robinson's "Tears of a Clown" and Marvin Gaye's "Heard it through the Grapevine" to mass white audiences in the 1960s.

Polygram was already its exclusive U.S. distributor and European licensee and a Polygram spokeswoman said Motown's back catalogue was "unrivalled in its field."

"I think the back catalogue is the most important thing," said Edwin van Oosten, analyst at UBS Philips Drew in London. "These titles are more or less classics."

No official figures are available but analysts estimate the top three music companies Time Warner Inc., Thorn EMI and Polygram each already held an 18 per cent global market share.

Come Zandbergen of Bank van Haften Labouchere said the Motown deal would boost Poly-

gram's market share to about 19 per cent in an already concentrated sector.

As well as giving Polygram a key stake in black music, Motown sets a mass-market foundation for new sound and multimedia carriers being launched by Philips Electronics N.V., which holds a majority stake in Polygram.

The popular appeal of Motown titles may help Philips new Digital Compact Cassette (DCC) in its fight against Sony of Japan's rival MiniDisc — a recordable compact disc.

DCC is a new tape product Philips is targeting at the mass market, giving Digital quality sound on players which are also compatible with old-style analogue cassettes.

Besides its classic sixties hits, Motown is developing new talent mainly in soul with artists like Boyz II Men, Another Bad Creation and Shanice. Mr. Bakker said.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Make sure you know what you want to accomplish today as the early AM aspect are so dynamic that you can accomplish a great deal if you get an early start. Look your best and dress up as you may get an invitation to lunch.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You seem to have many blocks in putting your special aptitude across so accept such delays philosophically and do your own part of any creative expression.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Matters at your residence can be disappointing unless you realize that those who dwell beneath your own roof have pressures hard to be solved.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Think about what you can do to use more care in dealing with your usual allies who are apt to be in a testy mood and require special diplomacy.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You are too apt to commit yourself to some expense which would be a mistake and have adverse later repercussions so use much caution.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You want to drive your standpoint through to a successful conclusion but there would be a number of obstacles in your path so proceed slowly.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You think you can get out from

under a situation which you do not like at all but it will not be as easy as you think so prepare for it to take some time.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) A friend who has agreed to do something special to aid you to gain a goal is in a questionable position now so don't be upset if there is a delay in support.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You need to be careful you do nothing today that can in any way interfere with your progress in outside or public matters, be conscientious.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You are eager to get going on some venture that appeals to you but don't be surprised to find some roadblocks that keep you from obtaining it.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You want to wipe the slate clean today and get a fresh start at whatever practical activities await your attention but it will take longer than you thought.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) It will be difficult to carry through with whatever agreements have been made with other persons but show you are doing your best anyway.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You need today to be conscious of every detail required to do a good job at your work even though you want to do it with more a flair now.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



10 killed, 30 injured in Cambodia train ambush

PHNOM PENH (R) — Attackers laid mines on a railway track in Cambodia and raked a train with gunfire and rockets, killing at least 10 people and injuring 30, the United Nations peacekeepers' spokesman said Tuesday.

The ambush, Monday afternoon, took place about 20 kilometres east of the provincial town of Kampot in the south of the country, he said.

The gunmen were unidentified but the area, dubbed the "violent triangle," is known as a sanctuary for Khmer Rouge guerrillas who have attacked trains in the region before.

The attackers first laid mines on the track of the Phnom Penh-bound train, then raked the carriages with small arms fire and shoulder-launched rockets, spokesman Eric Falt said.

Units from the U.N.'s French paratroop battalion based in Kampot province reached the ambush scene about 15 minutes after the attack. Soldiers wearing the U.N. peacekeepers' distinctive blue berets set up a first aid post and ferried the seriously injured to the provincial hospital at Kampot.

The antiquated railway system, winding through desolate countryside much of which was until recently a vast battlefield in Cambodia's 13-year civil war, is an easy target for guerrillas.

The militant Khmer Rouge, whose leaders abandoned an international peace process they had agreed to in Paris in 1991, have been left out of the coalition government that resulted from U.N.-organised elections in May.

Since then they have been active in attacking Cambodia's crumbling infrastructure, according to U.N. spokeswoman Susan Manuel. She said last week that road and rail bridges were being destroyed at the rate of one every two days.

On July 25, gunmen believed to belong to the radical Maoist group attacked the same Phnom Penh-bound train about 40 kilometres north-east of Kampot, injuring several passengers.

The insurgents are held responsible for derailing a train in the same vicinity in May, just before the elections.

Khmer Rouge guerrillas have been active in their attempts to destroy sections of Cambodia's north-west line to Sisophon. More than 30 metres of track were blown up last Tuesday between Sisophon, near the Thai border, and the north's most important city, Battambang.

Cambodia has only two rail lines, one to the southern port of Sihanoukville and a second stretching out of Sisophon in the far north-west of the country.

Meanwhile, the U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) said Tuesday it was sticking by its report that the Thai military had allowed the Khmer Rouge to attack and detain U.N. peacekeepers from its territory.

The assertion came as Thai military officials in Bangkok came up against the UNTAC version, claiming that rather than standing around videotaping the event — as U.N. spokesman Eric Falt said — the Thai soldiers tried to help the U.N. troops on Cambodian soil.

"We'll respond to that (denial) in a couple of days," he said, adding that UNTAC was compiling proof of the incident before making any more public statements.

The 21 peacekeepers detained Sunday by the Khmer Rouge and released in the Thai military at a camp 40 kilometres inside Thailand were flown back to the northern Cambodian province of Preah Vihear Tuesday, Mr. Falt said.

"There has been good cooperation with the Thai authorities in bringing them back," Mr. Falt said.

According to the UNTAC version, the attack on the U.N. border position started when a group of some 50 Khmer Rouge guerrillas who were attacking an adjacent government position turned their guns on the peacekeepers.

During a lull in the fighting three U.N. military observers, from China, France and Britain, along with a Cambodian interpreter, drove across the border to escape into Thailand, Mr. Falt said.

They were stopped by a group of Khmer Rouge guerrillas who told them the peacekeepers must leave.

Japan coalition leaders play down differences

TOKYO (R) — Tsutomu Hata, widely tipped to become Japan's next deputy premier, said Tuesday he was confident the eight-party coalition poised to take power this week would overcome its policy differences.

Leaders of new centre-right parties joined forces with the Socialists and other opposition groups last week to bring an end to almost 40 years of continuous rule by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

Critics have pointed out, however, that the eight parties remain far apart on key issues, spelling trouble for the fragile union.

"Once the new government is launched there could be debate over issues where we differ, like defence and the taxation system, but for now I see no one topic likely to cause problems," said Mr. Hata, head of the LDP-breakaway Japan Renewal Party that forms the core of the opposition coalition.

"In the areas of security, foreign affairs and defence, we have decided to maintain the fundamental policies of the previous government," he told a news conference.

The stage for political change was set after the LDP, its leaders implicated in a rash of "huge corruption scandals, failed to win a majority in the 311-seat, lower house in the July 18 general election. Although it won the

largest bloc — 223 members — it fell short of the 256-seat majority. Ichiro Ozawa, co-founder with Mr. Hata of the Japan Renewal Party, moved in to mastermind the creation of the 265-strong coalition, which will take over from the LDP when parliament meets Thursday.

He and the popular Hata, who had been considered the most likely candidate to lead the alliance, chose anti-corruption campaigner Morihiro Hosokawa, head of the centrist Japan New Party, as their candidate for coalition leader and prime minister.

Senior officials of the eight coalition parties decided Tuesday that the first order of business in parliament on Thursday would be to approve Mr. Hosokawa as prime minister and select Takako Doi, former Socialist chairman, as speaker of the lower house.

A cabinet line-up was expected to be announced Friday.

Mr. Hata, who is expected to be appointed finance minister for a second time, denied reports that Mr. Hosokawa was little more than a puppet to be manipulated by Mr. Ozawa.

"If we thought of him as a puppet then the government would fall right away and we'd go back to square one, with power reverting back to the LDP," he said.

"Mr. Hosokawa alone began fighting the political system when he launched his new party last

year... a move that led to the breakup of the system," Mr. Hata said. "He is the best and most appropriate figure to head this coalition."

Mr. Hata and Mr. Ozawa, both of whom had been groomed for the LDP leadership, rebelled against Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa in June and left the ruling party to form their own group.

Mr. Hata said the coalition government's main task was to introduce radical political reform laws to stamp out corruption and encourage democratic development.

Multi-seat electoral districts should be replaced by single-seat constituencies to cut down on graft, he said.

Under the current system, LDP politicians compete against one another in the same district and spend lavishly on campaigns, a development that has fueled the need for political funds in excess of legal limits.

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Sri Lanka Tamil temple blasts kill 6

COLOMBO (R) — Two explosions killed six people, including a Sinhalese bomber, and wounded 38 during a Tamil religious festival in central Colombo but police said Tuesday there was no communal motive.

They said the blasts, thought to have been hand grenades, occurred at midnight and early Tuesday morning at the Kathiresan Temple in the affluent Bambalapitiya area of the Sri Lankan capital.

"We believe the blasts were the result of rivalry over the allocation of stalls in the temple," a senior police officer said.

Police ruled out any communal motive for the attacks. Earlier some residents said the blasts might have been in retaliation for a Tamil rebel raid on an army camp in the north-east last week in which 62 people died.

That attack came on the 10th anniversary of the start of a rebel campaign for a homeland in the north and east for Tamils, who form about 20 per cent of the 17 million population.

The senior officer, who declined to be named, said a businessman who failed to win a contract to run a merry-go-round at the temple festival had hired a man to carry out the attacks.

He said the man, killed in the first blast in which eight people were wounded, was identified as a Sinhalese. It was thought he had brought the bomb to the temple and it had fallen out of his pocket and exploded.

The second blast killed five Tamils including two women and wounded 30 others. It was triggered when a woman unwrapped



Two volunteers Tuesday lift the body of a woman killed in one of the blasts inside a Hindu temple complex in Colombo (AFP photo)

a parcel she picked up, the police officer said.

He said investigations were continuing and would not say what would happen to the man who allegedly hired the bomber.

A witness who lost his wife in the second explosion told Reuters photographer Anuruddha Lokuhapuarachi that it occurred near a group of people drinking tea.

"My wife went to have a cup of tea and then I heard the blast and saw a cloud of smoke," he said. "When I went there, I saw several people lying on the ground."

Nearby trees were pockmarked with shrapnel.

Devotees, all from the minority Tamil community, had gathered on the last day of the annual Vel Festival in which statues of Hindu gods are taken in procession across Colombo in a brightly decorated cart.

The festival began Saturday amid tight police security.

S. Africa's black conservatives, rightwingers formalise relations

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Conservative black homeland leaders and rightwingers have cemented an alliance formed last year to counter perceived wheeler-dealing between the ANC and South Africa's white minority government.

The 10-party Concerned South Africans Group (COSAG), united in its quest for a future federal South Africa and in its dislike of the majority African National Congress (ANC), elected an executive committee last Monday, COSAG said in a statement Tuesday.

Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi formed COSAG in October last year after the government and the ANC agreed on measures to curb violence, including fencing in migrant worker hostels — mostly housing IFP supporters — and banning the public display of dangerous traditional weapons.

COSAG said Tuesday there was "strong solidarity" amongst parties on their demand for largely autonomous regions.

They also rejected last week's draft for South Africa's first post-apartheid constitution, which does not guarantee federalism, and the sufficient consensus method of reaching agreement at democracy negotiations, which prevents minority parties from stalling the talks.

The IFP, Mr. Buthelezi's KwaZulu government and their COSAG partner, the far-right

Conservative Party (CP), walked out of the talks on July 2 after democracy negotiators swept aside their protests to confirm April 27 as the date for the country's first non-racial election.

The IFP wants guarantees on federalism, the CP wants an African homeland, and both insist an election date cannot be set until South Africa's future form of state is decided.

A demarcation committee Monday recommended to the 23 parties remaining at democracy negotiations that the country's inner borders be redrawn to create nine regions instead of the present 13.

The committee rejected the idea of a separate white homeland, but Mr. Buthelezi's KwaZulu homeland and surrounding white-ruled Natal retain their borders.

A government spokesman said Tuesday that Pretoria was holding bilateral meetings with IFP officials to try and entice them back to the talks.

"We are looking at sufficient consensus and the election date, but there are no definite indications that they are going back soon," he said, adding that the next meeting would be held on Thursday.

Meanwhile proposals that a hybrid security force under multi-party control should be deployed as soon as possible in South Africa's township battlefields have been accepted by the white

minority government.

As the death toll from three days of fighting in black townships east of here climbed to at least 119, Law and Order Minister Herman Kriel told state-run television late Monday that the government would agree to a joint force.

His only proviso was that the formation and deployment of the force should be well planned.

The African National Congress (ANC) has proposed a joint force composed not only of the existing state police and security forces, but also of members of the ANC's armed wing Umkhonto We Sizwe (MK) and other armed formations.

Mr. Kriel's spokesman Captain Craig Kotze told AFP Tuesday the force would have to be "as inclusive as possible," pointing out that if MK cadres were involved, the right wing should also be enlisted, to avoid accusations of political bias.

But he doubted the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA), the armed wing of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) could take part.

"They have an armed struggle which runs contrary to the aims of the peace force," he said.

Mr. Kotze said it was now up to negotiators at multi-party democracy talks to work out how to implement the proposals.

The ANC demanded the sacking of "incompetent" South African law and order minister Tuesday.

Paper explains delayed flights: Blame the tower

PEKING (AP) — Flight delayed leaving Peking? It's become the rule rather than the exception over the past year, and Tuesday's China Daily newspaper finally offered an explanation: an outdated traffic control system. The dated traffic control system has not been changed since the 1950s, when at most a few planes took off and landed each day. More than 200 planes took off and landed each day last year at the capital international airport, and the number is expected to climb 53 per cent this year, the newspaper said. It said the traffic controllers still offer only one route in each direction, with only two flying altitudes on each route. Takeoffs must be separated by at least 10 minutes. In addition, only 11 per cent of the air space around Peking is open to civilian flights because of security concerns, the paper said. Air traffic control isn't the only aspect of Chinese aviation that is being badly strained by the rapid growth of air traffic over the past two years. Overall, domestic passenger traffic jumped 33 per cent last year and was up 24 per cent in the first half of this year compared with the same period of 1992. Pilots, crews, maintenance personnel and refueling systems are all in short supply, according to official news reports.

Explorers find 4 ancient Mayan towns

WASHINGTON (AP) — The ruins of four towns built by the Mayans have been found in a tropical rain forest in Belize in Central America and at least two appear to have been untouched by looters since they were abandoned more than 1,000 years ago. Peter S. Dunham, a Cleveland State University archaeologist, said the Mayan centres were found during a survey expedition in the mountainous rain forest along the Monkey River in Belize, an area previously believed to contain few such ruins. A report on the expedition is being published Monday by National Geographic Magazine. Mr. Dunham said he and his party arrived at one of the ancient towns shortly after looters had been there. "After passing more than a millennium undisturbed in the rain forest, it was looted only four days before we arrived," he said. Mr. Dunham said the four ruins appeared to have been towns of 1,000 to 2,500 in population that probably were last used in 700 to 900 A.D. One site, built on an island in the Monkey River, includes a plaza the size of a football field, built around a pyramid-shaped stone structure. Nearby is a large flat building that could have been a sort of "ball" for the community, he said.

F-16s collide, return safely to New York

GREENSBORO, Vt. (AP) — A pair of U.S. Air Force fighter jets bought by Israel collided over rural Vermont Monday, scattering a fuel tank and other debris across the countryside. The planes landed safely in New York. No one was injured, either in the planes or on the ground. One of the planes' external fuel tanks fell in three pieces in a pasture where it was picked up by the property's caretaker. A separate, large piece of wreckage fell onto a nearby hill where it was not immediately recovered, a witness said. The two F-16s took off from the Plattsburgh, N.Y., air force base and collided somewhere over Greensboro of Glover, towns about 25 miles (40 kilometres) northeast of Montpelier and about 50 miles (80 kilometres) from Plattsburgh, at about 7:15 a.m. (1115 GMT), said base spokesman Sgt. Ben Gonzales. The planes had been purchased by the Israeli government and were being delivered to that country. The pilots were uninjured, but when they returned to the base they were taken to a base hospital as a precaution. Sgt. Gonzales said the air force did not know what caused the collision, which would be investigated.

FDA approves new drug for epilepsy

WASHINGTON (AP) — The first new epilepsy drug in more than 10 years was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. The drug, Felbamate, will be prescribed to prevent partial seizures in adults. It was also approved for use to treat a rare form of epilepsy in children known as Lennox-Gastaut syndrome. Some 2.5 million Americans have epilepsy and 125,000 new patients are diagnosed each year. In clinical trials, Felbamate reduced the frequency of seizures and had minimal side effects, the FDA said. Wallace Laboratories of Cranbury, N.J., will market the new drug under the brand name Felbatol.

3 killed in Kashmir protest

SRINAGAR, India (AFP) — Three people were shot dead and five injured here Tuesday as Indian troops opened fire on Kashmir Muslims enraged by the killing of a boy and his parents by the security forces, police said.

About 7,000 people defied a city-wide curfew Tuesday and took to the streets of Srinagar to denounce the killing of 10-year-old Bilal Ahmad and his parents by members of the Border Security Force (BSF) Sunday, witnesses said.

Police said three people were killed and five injured when paramilitary troops opened fire on a slogan-shouting crowd of about 1,000 people in the downtown Khanayur district, where Sunday's killings took place.

Officials said troops used batons and teargas and fired into the air to break up anti-Indian demonstrations in other areas of this tense city.

Demonstrators ignored repeated demands to return to their homes and milled around in the streets shouting "we want freedom," "tyrants, killers leave our Kashmir" and other pro-independence slogans.

Army and paramilitary reinforcements were being rushed to Srinagar, the summer capital of Kashmir. India's only Muslim-majority state, to try to enforce the indefinite curfew.

Sunday's killing of the family sparked mass protests in the Kashmir Valley leading to the curfew under which has been largely ignored across the state.

Khasbulatov signals fresh assault on Yeltsin team

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Russian parliament Speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov called Tuesday for a new government of "national accord" and served notice that parliament would renew its drive for greater control over the executive branch.

Addressing local lawmakers and officials in the central city of Oryol 300 kilometres south of Moscow, Mr. Khasbulatov warned the legislature plans "to reinforce its constitutional control on the activities of the executive."

The speaker, who arrived in Oryol a day ahead of a planned visit there by President Boris Yeltsin to commemorate the Soviet World War II victory at Kursk, said current top state officials were governing the country with "disdain."

"Few who took part in the battle back then could have imagined that the very notion of fidelity to the Fatherland would someday be an object of mockery," Mr. Khasbulatov said, according to Interfax News Agency.

Using rhetoric targeted to appeal to World War II veterans and residents of the region where the largest tank battle ever took place, the speaker lashed out at government officials who, he said, "attack with mad hatred those who stand for the unity and prosperity of Russia."

Mr. Khasbulatov noted Russians view themselves as a "great people" and said the country now needed a coalition government that would undertake realistic reforms taking account of the "traditions... and national in-

terests of society."

His remarks followed publication of an opinion poll indicating that for the first time since his election Mr. Yeltsin was no longer the most popular politician in Russia and that public confidence in his leadership was on the wane.

The survey of 1,000 Russians conducted by the Public Opinion Foundation whose results were shown on Russian television Sunday put Mr. Yeltsin's approval rating at 24 per cent, down from 35 per cent in June and far below the 58 per cent vote of confidence he won in a referendum last April.

Although the survey had a margin of error of up to five per cent, it also gave Alexander Rutskoy, Mr. Yeltsin's rebel vice-president who has sided with mainline conservatives opposed to radical reforms, a rating of 26 per cent.

The survey was conducted a day after the Central Bank announced draconian plans to withdraw all pre-1993 rouble banknotes from circulation, triggering economic chaos in the country and a political witchhunt for who was to blame for the debacle.

Mr. Khasbulatov has notably singled out Finance Minister Boris Fyodorov to blame for the so-called monetary reform plan, but Mr. Fyodorov publicly denounced the plan from the time it was announced and has accused Central Bank Chairman Viktor Geraschenko of masterminding the scheme.

Mr. Yeltsin's office has so far maintained silence in the face of Mr. Khasbulatov's renewed

assault on the government, which came amid rumours in the press that Mr. Yeltsin was in poor health.

Kremlin spokesmen have strenuously denied those rumours and Mr. Yeltsin was thought likely to comment on the latest round in Russia's political crisis when he visits Oryol Wednesday.

Meanwhile at least five guerrilla groups are potential suspects in the assassination of the military governor and commanding general of Russia's volatile Caucasus Mountains, reports said Tuesday.

President Boris Yeltsin's hand-picked governor, Viktor Polyanchenko, 54, was killed Sunday by gunmen on horseback on a forested road near Vladikavkaz, the provincial capital.

Gen. Anatoly Koreitsky, the military commander for the region, and a bodyguard also died in the ambush of the governor's motorcade. Three other bodyguards were wounded. The gunman fled.

Senior Russian officials and special police investigators flew immediately to the tense region, where thousands of Russian troops have been deployed since November to separate feuding Muslim Ingush and Christian Ossetians.

There have been no arrests in the case.

The head of security in the region, Major General Alexander Khodov, has blamed the attack on Ingush militants, who are traditional horsemen. Many Ingush believe Mr. Polyanchenko and his Russian troops secretly armed the Ossetians.

NEWS IN BRIEF

U.S. river deals final blows

ST. LOUIS (AP) — The Mississippi apparently has struck its worst blow to St. Louis and rolled on. But even as the river recedes, the people here aren't ready to believe their ordeal is nearing an end. The largest metropolitan area threatened in six weeks of midwestern flooding escaped the predicted collision of record crests of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers Monday, but residents have seen all too intimately what heartbreak the water can bring. The rivers remain unnaturally high, levees are saturated, area farms and towns are submerged, and people continue sandbagging. "We've lived with this so long," said a tearful Margaret Lindemann, whose south St. Louis home, tucked behind a battered levee, appeared spared. "What is rebuff? It's been horrible." The waters have battered St. Louis since Friday, flooding hundreds of homes in suburban Chesterfield and St. Charles, forcing thousands of people to evacuate and inundating nearby farmland. But despite continued levee breaks and lingering fears, it appears the flood of '93 could be reaching its conclusion after claiming 45 lives and causing at least \$10 billion in damage.

Radiation leak reported at Russian plant

MOSCOW (R) — A small amount of radioactive waste leaked from a military plant in the Russian town of Chelyabinsk-40 but no one was harmed, ITAR-TASS News Agency said Tuesday. The agency, quoting the Russian Atomic Energy Ministry, said two cubic metres (70 cubic feet) of liquid waste leaked from a depressurised pipe at the town's Mayak plant Monday and contaminated about 100 square metres (1,000 square feet) of ground. Mayak and other secret military plants process weapons grade uranium and plutonium. "No one suffered and radiation levels for the personnel did not exceed maximum permissible norms," said TASS. It was not immediately possible to contact the ministry for comment.

Titan rocket explodes after liftoff

VANDENBERG AIR FORCE BASE, California (R) — A Titan 4 rocket believed to be carrying an expensive military spy satellite exploded Monday minutes after liftoff from Vandenberg's Air Force Base. It was the first failure of the four-year-old Titan 4 programme and one aerospace analyst called it a serious setback for plans for launching more intelligence satellites aboard America's most powerful unmanned rocket. The 113-foot (34-metre)-long Titan 4, manufactured by aerospace giant Martin Marietta Corp., blew up over the ocean several miles (km) off the California coast, said Nedra De Lima, a spokeswoman at Vandenberg, about 140 miles (215 kilometres) northwest of Los Angeles. The fiery debris fell harmlessly into the sea and there were no reports of injuries or damage, Ms. De Lima said. "There was never any hazard to populated areas," she said.

7 killed on Tajik-Afghan border

MOSCOW (AFP) — Seven people were killed overnight on the Tajik-Afghan border when two armed groups tried to penetrate into Tajikistan, the news agency ITAR-TASS reported Tuesday. No Russian Border Guards were amongst the dead and the incursion attempt failed, the agency added without giving further details about the identity of the victims. Thousands of Muslim Tajik rebels fled across the Afghan border from Tajikistan last year to escape a violent crackdown against them by the pro-Communist leadership in the capital Dushanbe. Russia believes the rebels are being supported by some Afghan Mujahideen. Russia sent troops to the Tajik-Afghan border last year as part of a joint CIS operation against the rebels and the flow of arms and drugs from Afghanistan.

Major offensive reported in Abkhazia

MOSCOW (AFP) — Georgian government troops launched a "major offensive" in Abkhazia Monday evening, breaching a truce in force since Wednesday, Interfax reported, quoting the secessionist Abkhaz government. According to the Abkhaz Defence Ministry, the offensive was mounted northeast of the capital Sukhumi. However the Georgian embassy in Moscow denied the report. "The situation is calm in and around Sukhumi," the embassy said citing a report by Vladimir Chikovani, military adviser to President Eduard Shevardnadze. Abkhaz military chiefs said heavy fighting erupted at 6:30 p.m. (1430 GMT) near Alianda in an area where Russian, Abkhaz and Georgian observers are monitoring the ceasefire. Earlier Monday, Mr. Shevardnadze, quoted by ITAR-TASS News Agency said it was important that the United Nations should participate in settling the conflict over Abkhazia's bid to secede from Georgia.

Panamanian ship sinks off Japan

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel cancels India music tour in 'Jerusalem' row

NEW DELHI (R) — A leading Israeli orchestra has called off its tour to India after New Delhi asked the group to drop the word "Jerusalem" from its name, Israeli officials said Tuesday. They said the Jerusalem symphony orchestra decided to cancel the visit, billed as Israel's first major cultural export to India, after the group's board of directors rejected New Delhi's request. "The board obviously decided that it would be insulting to accede to India's suggestion on Jerusalem," an Israeli official told Reuters on condition of anonymity.

Taiwan plans talks with China in mid-August

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan is to hold talks with China later this month on the repatriation of thousands of illegal Chinese immigrants, a government spokesman said Tuesday. The talks will be the first formal negotiations between the two sides since they agreed at a high-level meeting in Singapore in April to create a system of regular contacts. Shi Hwei-Yow, deputy secretary-general of the Straits Exchange Foundation which handles Taiwan's links with China, will hold talks with his Chinese counterparts in China in mid-August, said Yeh China-Feng, vice-chairman of the cabinet's Mainland Affairs Council.

Demjanjuk has no right to return — U.S.

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The Justice Department said Monday that John Demjanjuk, who was stripped of his U.S. citizenship, has no right to return to the United States while he appeals his 1986 extradition to Israel. The United States denaturalised Demjanjuk in 1981 in part for his service at the SS training camp in Trawniki, and for lying about his wartime activities on applications to enter the United States and in later sworn testimony. The Israeli supreme court last week overturned the 73-year-old retired automaker's 1988 conviction and death sentence, saying there was insufficient evidence that he was a guard at the Nazi camp in Treblinka. Demjanjuk, formerly an Ohio resident, appealed to a federal court, accusing the Justice Department of withholding information that could have helped his defence in the Israeli trial. He asked to return to the United States pending conclusion of his appeal, scheduled to be argued Sept. 3.

Israel wants Croatia to apologise

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel will not open diplomatic relations with Zagreb until Croatia offers an apology for the persecution of Jews during World War II, a foreign ministry spokesman said Tuesday. "We will not establish diplomatic relations with Zagreb until (Croatian President Franjo) Tudjman apologises for his people's attitude towards the Jews in World War II," spokesman Eytan Manor said. Mr. Tudjman, who has reportedly described the Israeli-supported figure of six million Jews killed in the Holocaust as exaggerated, would have to withdraw comments judged as anti-Semitic in Israel contained in his book, "Wilderness of Historic Reality," Manor added. Israel recognised Croatia in 1992 but has not opened consular or diplomatic relations.

Algeria battles locust invasion

ALGIERS (R) — Thirty teams of experts are fanning out in southern Algeria to fight swarms of locusts now eating their way across neighbouring Mali and Niger and are expected in Algeria next month. Nomads have already reported the presence of huge locust swarms in the north of the two neighbouring countries, the Algerian daily Al Watan said Tuesday. "The situation in Algeria calls for grave concern because the locusts have started to reach the region from the shores of the Red Sea, considerable swarms are expected to arrive by September," state television added. Agriculture Minister Elyes Mesli said on radio that 700,000 litres of pesticide had been sent to the area and a total of two million litres were available. Small aircraft and helicopters would be used to fight the expected invasion.

Rafsanjani starts second term as president

TEHRAN (R) — President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani started his second four-year term in office Tuesday when Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei formally endorsed the result of June elections. Tehran Radio said Mr. Rafsanjani, who won 10.6 million votes or 63 per cent of the total cast, has vowed to continue free-market reforms to transform Iran's centralised economy. The 58-year-old cleric is due to take the oath of office before Majlis (parliament) Wednesday and introduce his new cabinet to the assembly Sunday, according to newspaper reports.

Two blasts rock Pakistani city; 4 injured

LAHORE (AFP) — Two bomb explosions rocked this second largest Pakistani city Tuesday and first reports said at least four people were injured. A bomb ripped through the ground floor office of the Punjab Advocate General (PAG) in the Lahore high court premises and another explosion later hit the headquarters of paramilitary rangers, police said. At least four people were reportedly injured, one of them critically, in the first blast, which also wrecked two cars parked outside the buildings. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the explosions, the first to occur during the current campaign for general elections in October. The incidents coincided with a report in the mass circulation daily Jang which said the authorities had discovered a foreign-inspired plot to disturb peace in the run-up to the polls.

IAEA inspectors en route to N. Korea

SEOUL (R) — A team of inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is on its way to North Korea for a week-long review of its nuclear facilities, a spokesman for the IAEA said Tuesday. The IAEA had been negotiating with North Korea for more than two weeks to resume inspections halted by Pyongyang in March when it abruptly announced it planned to withdraw from a key safeguard treaty. "A three-man team of inspectors got their visas in Beijing and will arrive in Pyongyang on Tuesday," David Kyd told Reuters in Vienna earlier in the day. "They will begin a week-long inspection on Wednesday." Asked if the inspection team would be given access to all of North Korea's nuclear sites, Mr. Kyd said it was hard to predict the extent of their activities. South Korea, meanwhile, said it would propose a round of North-South border talks on nuclear matters on Wednesday. "We have not fixed a date yet, it would be decided after closely watching Pyongyang's reaction to the visit by the IAEA team..." a unification ministry official said.

Indian opposition denounces poll delay

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India's opposition parties Tuesday blasted Chief Election Commissioner T.N. Seshan for putting off all elections until December, and suggested they would seek his impeachment by parliament. The main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) called Mr. Seshan's shock order "surprising" and charged that it had been done to save the ruling Congress (I) Party from facing crucial elections in four states in November. "The postponement (of elections) beyond November appears to have been done in collusion with the government," said spokeswoman Sushma Swaraj of the Hindu-revivalist BJP.

FBI agents called back from Pakistan

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents sent to Pakistan to search for a suspect in a fatal shooting outside Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) headquarters in January have returned home after running out of leads there. "The most important reason is we just don't have the volume of information that we had originally," FBI spokesman Frank Scalfidi said. "It just doesn't warrant the cost of keeping people there. The case is not closed by any stretch of the imagination. If it requires an immediate FBI presence, we'll be on the next flight." The FBI sent agents to Pakistan on Feb. 26 to aid in the search for Mir Aimal Kansi, who is wanted in the Jan. 25 shooting outside CIA headquarters in McLean, Virginia. Two people died and three others were wounded in the shooting.

NATO strike threat to Serbs 'very real'

Combined agency dispatches

BRUSSELS — The threat of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) air strikes against Bosnian Serb forces was a vital step in the campaign for peace in Bosnia and the clearest warning yet that Serbs must stop strangling Sarajevo, a top U.S. official said Tuesday.

Reviewing the air attack threat which NATO issued after marathon talks that ended early on Tuesday in Brussels, U.S. Assistant State Secretary Stephen Oxman said Washington had got exactly what it wanted from its NATO allies.

He added that the threat to the Serbs was a real one.

"If they do not cease their efforts to strangle Sarajevo, NATO will be prepared to use air power," Mr. Oxman told reporters.

"We are very gratified that the NATO alliance has agreed to the (U.S.) president's proposal. I think it's very important for the peace process and the NATO alliance," Mr. Oxman said.

U.S. officials said the alliance's military wing was urgently working out plans to implement the threat if required. Ambassadors would meet next Monday to review the situation on the ground in Bosnia and assess their options.

The officials refused to be drawn on any details of how such an operation would work but noted that the Serbs would have to change their ways fast.

The White House said the NATO decision to go along with the U.S. proposal tells Serbian aggressors that "the clock is ticking."

President Bill Clinton expressed confidence Monday that the allies would not permit the Bosnian capital "to fall or starve."

The Europeans had initially balked at supporting the U.S. plan.

Welcoming the decision, White House Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers said that the NATO allies had "confirmed the U.S. view



Bosnian children perch on a car carcass at a U.N. base in Sarajevo, hoping to cadge something to eat from the soldiers (AFP photo)

that the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and particularly in Sarajevo, was unacceptable."

Ms. Myers noted that Mr. Clinton had written NATO heads of state on Friday "to express his view that the Serbs' effort to strangle the city of Sarajevo — through continued artillery attacks, military offensives and cut-offs of food, water and fuel — had reached a critical point, threatening a humanitarian disaster and undermining prospects for the negotiations" on ending the ethnic conflict.

Ms. Myers said the agreement does not impose a strict deadline on the Serbs. "I don't think there is a firm time line, but the clock is ticking," he said.

She called the endorsement "a good step forward."

Secretary of State Warren Christopher wrote his NATO counterparts Friday seeking their support for the U.S. threat of air power.

In Geneva, the Bosnian presidency Tuesday ordered their Muslim-led forces to halt all offensive actions in Bosnia-Herzegovina and said they would remain in peace negotiations

here.

President Alija Izetbegovic, in a letter to the leaders of the United Nations and the European Community, said the collective presidency had ordered Bosnian government troops "to use force only in legitimate defence."

Bosnian Croat members withdrew from the presidency earlier in the day in protest at continued Bosnian army attacks on Croatian positions in central Bosnia.

Bosnian Serbs meanwhile agreed to allow a team of U.N. monitors onto a captured mountain overlooking Sarajevo, but gave no indication they would withdraw as their leader had promised.

Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader, promised Monday at peace talks in Geneva to give up Mount Bjelasnica and let U.N. peacekeepers into the area, a spokesman for the peace conference said.

But the radio said Tuesday that Bosnian government forces were expecting new attacks on Mount Igman, which lies between Bjelasnica and Sarajevo. Igman is

the last supply route for defenders of Sarajevo, and its fall would further isolate the besieged Bosnian capital.

Barry Frewer, the U.N. spokesman in Sarajevo, said that besides the shelling of a village between Bjelasnica and Igman, "now that Serbs have taken that area (Bjelasnica), it would appear that have stopped their offensives."

Delegates at the Geneva talks agreed Friday to a ceasefire and to a division of Bosnia-Herzegovina into three republics, a move regarded as a first step towards a partition of the country in order to end 16 months of ruthless warfare.

In Belgrade, Zoran Lilic, president of the run-Yugoslavia — Serbia and Montenegro — sent a letter to President Clinton expressing his concern that such action would put an end to any real chance of peace in Bosnia.

The threats, Mr. Lilic wrote, came "at a time when real progress was coming out of the Geneva talks."

Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic was also critical Tuesday saying that "all these threats may ruin this conference which had been close to a solution."

"Those threats came in and the Muslims are reluctant because they have hopes for a military intervention," he said.

He warned that if the "Muslims use delaying tactics Sarajevo will suffer longer."

Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin left for Paris, London and Geneva Tuesday, saying he and his Islamic colleagues would urge swift action on the NATO plans for air strikes to lift the Bosnian Serb siege of Sarajevo.

"If these (strikes) had taken place in August 1992, 200,000 lives could have been spared, so many people may not have been displaced and Bosnia-Herzegovina would not have gone down as a black mark in world history," Mr. Cetin told reporters.

He was to lead a delegation of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) in talks with French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe, British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd and international peace mediators Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg.

The foreign ministers of Pakistan, Tunisia and Senegal, as well as OIC Secretary-General Hamid Al Ghabid, accompanied him.

Malaysian peacekeeping troops will deploy in Bosnia only if there is adequate air cover and existing U.N. troops maintain their positions, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad said.

"We do not want our troops to be slaughtered," Mr. Mahathir told a news conference at the end of a three-day visit to the Southeast Asian Sultanate of Brunei.

Mr. Mahathir said if U.N. troops were withdrawn from Bosnia leaving only Malaysia soldiers to face the Serbs, it would only "punish us for talking a lot."

"The U.N. must provide air cover, supply equipment and must not withdraw the existing U.N. peacekeeping troops. We will be there to help the U.N. save the Bosnians, not to attack or fight the Serbs," he said.

Sheikh's lawyer says U.S. slanted facts

NEW YORK (Agency) — A lawyer for Muslim cleric Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, whose alleged followers have been linked to two alleged New York bombings, accused the government on Monday of slanting facts to portray her client as a dangerous man.

Meanwhile, ABC television reported the sheikh played no role in an alleged conspiracy to attack the United Nations, but he apparently gave it his blessing.

Quoting Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) transcripts of a taped conversation, ABC said Sidiq Ibrahim Sidiq Ali, accused of being a leader in the conspiracies, told an FBI informant that Sheikh Abdul Rahman had said bombing the United Nations was "a must."

After the deadly bombing of the World Trade Centre in February, the government said it also had uncovered plans to blow up the United Nations, a federal office building in New York and two tunnels linking New Jersey and New York states.

The taped transcripts quoted by ABC allegedly concern some of the planning for these attacks, which were foiled.

FBI informant Edam Salem asked whether Sheikh Abdul Rahman interfered in the planned bombings, ABC said.

"No, no, he doesn't interfere

and has no relation with it. You don't put him in the middle. You simply ask him a general question," Mr. Sidiq Ali said, according to ABC.

During a hearing in federal court in White Plains, New York, north of New York City, lawyer Barbara Nelson argued that immigration officials have wrongly decided to deport Sheikh Abdul Rahman and that the ruling should be overturned.

Last month the Board of Immigration Appeals in Washington upheld an order by an immigration judge that Sheikh Abdul Rahman be expelled from the United States.

Ms. Nelson told U.S. District Judge Charles L. Bryant that Sheikh Abdul Rahman was "robbed of an opportunity to have a hearing where he could rebut the allegations against him."

Mr. Bryant did not immediately rule. Sheikh Abdul Rahman, 55, who was not in court Monday, is being held in a federal prison pending the outcome of the case.

At closed-door Immigration and Naturalisation Service hearings last year and in January, Sheikh Rahman defended himself against accusations.

The Jan. 20 hearing before Immigration Judge Daniel Meisner came more than a month before the Feb. 26 World Trade Centre explosion.

Kuwait says it is alarmed by Iraq's renewed claim

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait said Tuesday it was alarmed by a renewal of Iraq's territorial claim and accused Baghdad of holding Kuwaitis captive as a bargaining card in case of any future disputes.

"Their press and radio yesterday came back with the same old aggressive attitude and behaviour. That is very alarming to us," said Information Minister Sheikh Saud Nasser Al Sand Al Sabah.

"What concerns us is that we see our fears are justified, that the Iraqi regime continues to hold its aggressive attitude against Kuwait," he told Reuters in an interview.

"This should be condemned by the world community because Iraq still defies the will of the world community."

Iraq's official media said on the third anniversary of the Aug. 2, 1990 invasion Monday that one day it would again try to capture Kuwait because the emirate was part of Iraq.

Iraq annexed Kuwait and claimed it as its 19th province shortly after the invasion. A U.S.-led coalition of Western, Arab and Asian armies drove out Iraqi troops in February 1991. Iraq's Defence Ministry newspaper Al Qadisiyah also Monday

demanding the departure of Kuwait's ruling Sabah family as a condition for peace in the region.

Asked to comment on this, Sheikh Saud said the family's rule was the wish of the Kuwaiti people and was entrenched in the constitution.

"The wish of the Kuwaiti people is quite clear and quite unambiguous," he said. "The acceptance of the leadership of this country has been enshrined in the 1962 constitution. It is not for the Iraqi regime to comment on this."

Sheikh Saud said the country had returned to normality in every respect apart from three outstanding problems with Iraq.

"These are with regard to the missing people and detainees in Iraq, to Iraq's acceptance of all conditions and resolutions of the United Nations regarding the border demarcation, and to its readiness and acceptance of compensation for Kuwait."

Iraq has refused to recognise a U.N. demarcation of the 1963 disputed border completed in May and has yet to agree terms with the world body under which Baghdad may sell \$1.6 billion worth of oil to fund war compensation payments and other expenses.

Draft law reportedly ready for study

(Continued from page 1)

the Election Law would take place through a mechanism similar to the one through which the National Charter was adopted in 1991. Later statements have strongly indicated, however, that "a national dialogue" on possible changes to the Election Law has been taking place in the media and other public fora.

But political parties opposed to a unilateral government action on the law say they are not aware of any appropriate debate on the legislation. "Unless," as one Brotherhood deputy put it, "one is taking place behind closed doors."

The government has said that the intense debate of the law in the press and among the country's intelligentsia is "part" of the dialogue that the King has called for, but various political groups insist that this

kind of debate is not enough.

A highly-informed political observer Tuesday contended that it had become clear that no national dialogue similar to the one launched when the National Charter was endorsed would be held to discuss possible changes to the Election Law.

"This has been ruled out," he said.

Upon return from Turkey Monday, King Hussein said that he would announce a decision on the elections "at the right time" and after studying the results of the dialogue that took place during his three-week visit to Europe.

The observer, who had occupied a senior post in the government, said he expected all political parties to participate in the election even if the law was changed.

"They will resist the change," he said. "But they will finally agree to contest the

elections unless a major and clear violation of the law takes place."

Political parties are becoming increasingly frustrated with the delay of government action on the elections, with many accusing the Cabinet of "confusing the people."

In a letter to Dr. Majali last week, the 15 political parties which called for passage of any changes to the law through Parliament, also urged the government to clarify its position on the elections.

Political observers believe the delay as well as the uncertainty about the law that would govern the elections are trying the hands of candidates who are not able to formulate or start their election campaigns.

The government, however, rejects these charges saying it is governing according to the Constitution.

Palestinians prefer confederation

(Continued from page 1)

the fact that Israel, Lebanon and Syria are able to work together on a problem and take a step to ensure that the peace process is not derailed."

Mr. Rabin said Tuesday Israel was ready to make compromises and take risks in order to advance the peace talks.

Mr. Rabin spoke to reporters after an 80-minute meeting with Mr. Christopher. The prime minister said they discussed "various options in various directions," towards reviving the stalled Arab-Israeli talks.

"We on our part are ready to make compromises, take calculated risks to advance the course of peace," Mr. Rabin said.

Dr. Haidar Abdul Shafi, a senior delegate, stayed away from the Palestinians' meeting with Mr. Christopher to protest Israel's attack on Lebanon as well as the lack of progress.

"This Lebanese war and the American attitude towards Israel makes a mockery of speaking about international law and human rights," Dr. Abdul Shafi said. "I am very disappointed."

Dr. Ashrawi said the Americans did not present any new proposals, but that Mr. Christopher asked the Palestinians to make suggestions on how to overcome the deadlock.

She said the Palestinians hoped to come up with detailed plans by Thursday, when the delegation is scheduled to meet Mr. Christopher again.

Earlier, Mr. Peres said Israel was ready to break the negotiating deadlock by giving Palestinians autonomy in the Gaza Strip, and to consider Palestinian demands to include Jericho. Another Israeli proposal is "early empowerment," or letting Palestinians take immediate con-

trol of some administrative functions.

Dr. Ashrawi said the Palestinians preferred confederation over autonomy in Gaza first, even if it included Jericho, because the latter left too much room for twisting the final result.

"If we talk about early empowerment, it means you are already fragmenting the peace process. You are fragmenting the territorial aspects of the peace process, the time frame as well as the authority," she said.

She said the Palestinians had already rejected the idea of early empowerment as unworkable, but might weigh it again under different circumstances.

Dr. Ashrawi said Jerusalem remained a central concern.

The Americans had proposed postponing any discussion of

Jerusalem until all other issues were settled.

Under the initial framework of the talks, Israel and the Palestinians were to negotiate a formula for autonomy, and three years later talks on the final status would begin.

Mr. Christopher also met Mr. Peres ahead of two hours with the Palestinians, led by chief peace negotiator Faisal Husseini.

"We will be discussing ways to stimulate movement and get the peace negotiations back on track and refocus the parties on the core issues," the secretary said.

Mr. Peres said Israel was prepared to advance on one track if all parties were not ready to move together. But he urged the Palestinians not "to lose time and to come into the picture."

Beirut prepares army

(Continued from page 1)

ruined homes, many have blamed Hizbollah, as well as Israel, for last week's destruction.

Iran radio broadcast a denial Tuesday of reports that it had ordered Hizbollah to halt rocket attacks on Israel.

Lebanese government sources had said Monday that Tehran had ordered the Iranian-funded Hizbollah in Lebanon to halt the rocket attacks on Israel.

The sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Syria, Iran's staunchest ally in the Arab World, had called on Tehran to control the guerrillas. Israeli leaders have praised Syria for its part in ending the fighting.

The Iran radio broadcast, monitored in Nicosia, quoted a Foreign Ministry spokesman as saying reports of an alleged deal were meant "to cover up Tel Aviv's failure to realise its objectives in the recent attacks."

As the tens of thousands of southerners returned to their

COLUMN

Diana yells at photographer

LONDON (AP) — Princess Diana yelled at a photographer who snapped her and her sons leaving a movie theatre Monday after watching Jurassic Park, the freelancer said. Princess Diana left the princes, sprinted 10 metres to photographer Keith Butler and shouted "you make my life hell," Mr. Butler said. She then turned on her heel and rejoined Princes William and Harry outside the theatre in London's Leicester Square, he said. The princess's outburst follows a weekend newspaper guessing game about merchant banker William Van Straubenzee, an old friend who accompanied her to a weekend house party in Scotland. Mr. Van Straubenzee's family denied any romantic link, but newspaper carried photographs of Princess Diana playing tennis while Mr. Van Straubenzee watched from the sidelines at Floors Castle in Scotland. They referred to him pointedly as a "handsome bachelor." Princess Diana and Prince Charles are formally separated and conduct independent lives, appearing rarely together. They divide time with their sons. The freelance photographer, Mr. Butler, said he had followed the princess for 13 years. "I have had many a close encounter from time to time, some pleasant, some not so pleasant. I think it was about letting out the frustrations of a weekend of being tormented by the press and all that has been written.... I think she had just had too much. It was time to explode."

Home alone mother gets 6 months

LONDON (AFP) — A 23-year-old British woman was sentenced to six months in jail Monday for leaving her two-year-old daughter home alone eight hours a day, five days a week for a year while she went to work. The young mother from the central town of Warwick initially hired a babysitter when she landed a job in a travel agency but eventually reached the point where she could no longer afford it, prosecutors said. The woman then started leaving the child home by herself, providing it with food, toys and removing all potentially dangerous objects from her reach. She would leave the television turned on. At first the mother would come home at lunchtime but had to stop because her daughter threw tantrums every time she left to go back to work. "It was a choice between food and clothes and the child-minder," the mother, who was not identified, told the court. "If I had had money I would not have done it. It was a case of that or not keeping my job and living on benefit." The judge in the case, Harrison Hall, was unforgiving. "Having had a child, the absolute priority is to look after it. There must be an alternative to leaving a child alone all day, a thing you would not even do to a dog." The little girl was placed in the custody of her grandmother.

JFK's heroism recalled

FALL RIVER, Mass. (AP) — Fifty years after a Japanese destroyer sank patrol torpedo boat No. 109 on a moonless night in the Pacific, several hundred people gathered here Monday to celebrate the heroism of the boat's captain — Lt. John F. Kennedy. Although the slain president's reputation has taken some hits in recent years, the story of his role in saving 10 men on PT-109 still shines, especially for Gerard Zinser, the only surviving crew member. Mr. Zinser, 75, remembered his skipper Monday as "a down-to-earth person. He had courage. He was brave." The Naples, Fla., man was among the several hundred veterans and Kennedy relatives who attended a ceremony marking the 50th anniversary of the sinking.

Major to seek injunction against satirical magazine

LONDON (AFP) — British Prime Minister John Major will seek an injunction against a satirical magazine to restrain it from further publication of libellous material about him, his lawyers announced. In an article earlier this year, the magazine Scallywag alleged that Mr. Major had had an affair with caterer Clare Latimer. Mr. Major denied the allegations and issued a writ for libel. Scallywag is contesting the action. If the case goes to court, Mr. Major would become the first prime minister to take the witness stand in a libel case. It is thought he is keen to avoid this.